

of an affair, in which were embarked the lives and fortunes of many of the principal citizens, he had yet sufficient command over his passions to preserve an air of serenity in his looks during the day, and in all public places; but when he returned home, and especially during the night, he could not maintain the same kind of firmness, and his wife perceived, that his breast laboured with some mighty design, some important concern, which he carefully endeavoured to conceal from her. As she loved him tenderly; she was desirous of sharing with him in his present inquietude. But before she would demand any explanation from him, she resolved to make a very extraordinary trial of her own fortitude. She accordingly took a knife, and having sent her woman out of the room, she stabbed herself with it in the thigh. The wound bled copiously, and the anguish that attended it was followed by a fever. Brutus was filled with the most terrible apprehensions for the safety of his wife, who, in the extremity of her sufferings, addressed her husband thus—"Brutus, I am Cato's daughter, and was given you, not merely to share your bed and table as a mistress, but to partake of your good or your bad fortune. Your behaviour to me has been irreproachable. But how can I serve you, or in what manner can I shew my sense of your goodness, if it be not in assisting you to support the latent uneasiness that now oppresses you, and to calm your disturbed and distracted mind? Why then do you deny me your confidence? I know that women in general have no great reputation for secrecy; but a virtuous education, and the keeping of good company, have a great influence on the tempers and dispositions, even of women: and who has a better right to claim some merit on those accounts, than Cato's daughter, and Brutus's wife? However, I relied not on what is past; I resolved to put my fortitude to a fresh trial; and I am now convinced, that pain itself cannot get the better of my courage." So saying, she shewed him the wound she had given herself, and acquainted him likewise with her reason for giving it. Brutus was wrapt in wonder and admiration at her extraordinary virtue, and with uplifted hands implored the gods, that, by succeeding in his enterprize, he might shew himself a husband not unworthy so exalted a character as Porcia. He then acquainted her with the whole scheme of the conspiracy, nor had he any reason to repent of the confidence he had reposed in her.

THE plot being now brought to maturity, the next question was, what was the most proper place for putting it in execution. Some proposed the Campus Martius, while Cæsar should be presiding at the election of magistrates; others

thought



thought it would be better to attack him while he was entering the theatre, or while walking in the sacred street that led to the capitol; but the majority were of opinion, that the best method would be to kill him in the senate-house, and in the midst of the senators while fully assembled. From this they hoped to derive two material advantages. In the first place it would furnish themselves with an opportunity of meeting without giving cause for any suspicion, as almost all of them were senators; and, in the next place, it would enable such of the other senators, as wished well to their cause, to join them immediately on the death of the tyrant. Even the very place where the senate was to meet on the ides of March, the day on which they meant to execute their project, and the senate proposed conferring upon Cæsar the title of king in all the provinces of the empire beyond the limits of Italy, seemed to have something in it that might be construed into a favourable omen. It was an apartment built by Pompey, contiguous to his theatre; it bore his name, and on the inside was adorned with his statue; so that if Cæsar could be killed in this place, the gods themselves might seem to have brought to Pompey his most acceptable victim.

A PLOT, however, that was known to so many, could not well be conducted without giving cause for some suspicion; even Cæsar began to be apprehensive of the secret designs of Brutus and Cassius. For one day, when he was advised to be on his guard against Antony and Dolabella; “O! (said he) it is not those plump, jolly, well-dressed fellows that I am afraid of; it is your pale, meagre ones;” alluding thereby to Brutus and Cassius. Brutus particularly appeared formidable to him both on account of his extraordinary courage, the severity of his morals, and the great number of his friends; and once, when he was cautioned against trusting him too far, “What (said he, clapping his hand on his heart) do you imagine, that Brutus will not stay till this debilitated carcase has finished its career?” This he seems to have said from a conviction, that, after himself, no one had a better right, than Brutus, to enjoy the first posts of power and dignity in Rome.

HAD Cæsar been of a superstitious, or even a suspicious disposition, there were several circumstances that might have been construed into prognostics of his fall. The augurs had foretold, that his life would be in danger on the ides of March, and for thirty days before. But what seemed to make the chief impression upon his mind was a dream, which his wife Calphurnia had the night preceding his assassination. She dreamt of her holding him in her arms all bloody and covered with wounds. When she awaked in the morning, she ac-



quainted him with this circumstance, and earnestly intreated him not to go abroad that day; and as Cæsar happened to be somewhat indisposed, he seemed at first inclined to follow his advice, and gave orders to Antony to go and dismiss the senate. But Decimus Brutus, one of the conspirators, who happened to be present, protested strongly against such a resolution. He represented to the dictator, that, by the proposed delay, he would furnish his enemies with arms against himself; that the senate, whose intent in assembling was to confer upon him the title of king, and the sovereignty of all the provinces beyond Italy, would consider such a delay as a manifest affront; that should they be told they must defer their deliberations till Calphurnia happened to have better dreams, every body would think he meant to reduce them, not only to a state of absolute slavery, but even to such a contemptible condition, as to render them objects of ridicule to all the world; and finally, that if no arguments could dissuade him from proroguing the senate, he had better go to it himself, and propose it to the members. He concluded his discourse by taking the dictator by the hand, and as it were leading him out of his house.

THIS was a most critical moment to the conspirators; for the plot was now discovered, and Cæsar had like to have been informed of it. When he came out of his house, there was a slave that attempted to speak to him, but not being able to approach on account of the crowd, he went to Calphurnia, and desired her to secure him till the dictator's return, as he had something of the last importance to communicate to him.

IN his way to the senate, he received a circumstantial account of the whole conspiracy, which was put into his hands by Artemidorus, the Greek philosopher. This man, who assisted several of Brutus's friends in their studies, had made a discovery of the whole plot; and having drawn up a memorial containing the heads of his information, he joined the persons who were presenting petitions to Cæsar. But observing, that the dictator delivered every paper, as he received it, to a secretary, he came close up to him, and as he delivered his memorial, he said to him, "Read this immediately, for it concerns you much." Cæsar, accordingly, kept the memorial; but by reason of the numbers that pressed round him, and to whom he was obliged to give audience, he had no time to read it. As he entered the senate-house, he met Spurinna, the augur, who had foretold his danger, to whom he said, smiling, "Well, Spurinna, the ides of March are come." "Yes, (replied the augur) but they are not yet gone."



THE conspirators had arrived some time before him, and longed for his appearance. Brutus had come alone: the rest had attended Cassius, whose son had that day entered into man's estate, and taken the customary habit; and after the ceremony, they all met in Pompey's portico, where the senate was convened.

Plutarch observes, that any spectator, who had been let into the secret, must have been struck with admiration at the courage and intrepidity of these men, who, though they were upon the point of executing so hazardous an enterprize, yet maintained a serenity in their words and actions, as if they had intended nothing uncommon. Some of them were prætors, and actually sat as judges, hearing causes with all the presence of mind imaginable, discussing the various points that arose in the proceedings, and giving such judgments as the nature of the case seemed to require: and when a person, whom Brutus had condemned, threatened to appeal to Cæsar, Brutus replied with great indifference, "Cæsar neither does nor will prevent my seeing the laws observed."

SEVERAL things, however, happened, sufficient to alarm the fears of the conspirators. The first and principal one was Cæsar's delay in coming, occasioned, as we have said, by Calphurnia's dream. Then Casca, one of the party, had like to have divulged the secret, through an ambiguous compliment that was paid him. One of his friends came up to him, and said, "You thought to have been very secret, but Brutus has acquainted us with the whole affair." Casca thought this man had been informed of their design, and had he replied, the whole had been discovered. But his surprise gave the other time to add, with a smile, "What then, my friend, are you all of a sudden grown so rich as to stand for the edility?" The words composed Casca, who trembled to think of the danger, into which his inadvertency had almost led him.

BRUTUS himself had a most violent shock to sustain; word being brought him, that his wife Porcia, who had been for some time indisposed, was now at the point of death. Having drawn the secret from her husband in the manner we have mentioned, she had had the fortitude, for some time, to maintain the usual serenity of her temper; but when the moment arrived for the execution of the plot, she was suddenly seized with a most dreadful panic. The least noise alarmed her; she enquired of every one she saw, whether any accident had happened to Brutus, and sent messenger after messenger to bring her information. Unable, at last, to sustain any longer such a violent conflict of passion, she grew pale, and presently



lost her senses; and her attendants, with difficulty, got her into her chamber, and put her to bed. It was now generally thought that she could not recover; and an account of this accident was immediately sent to Brutus. He was greatly concerned; but not so much as to be drawn off from the prosecution of the public enterprize in which he had engaged: the interest of his country outweighed with him every private consideration, even those of the most tender and affecting nature.

THE conspirators could not be said to be free from alarm to the very last moment: for just as Cæsar stepped out of his carriage, a senator, named Popilius, came up and spoke to him for some time with much emotion; and Cæsar seemed to listen to him with great attention. Now this Popilius had some time before, come to Brutus and Cassius, and said, "I wish your design may succeed, and I advise you not to delay it any longer; for if you do, it will be discovered, as there are already several private accounts of it." From this discourse they inferred, that Popilius was privy to their design; and when they saw him speak to Cæsar, they and their friends to whom they had communicated their suspicions, began to conclude, that he was giving the dictator an account of the conspiracy. The consequence was, that an universal consternation took place among them: they looked at each other, and agreed by signs not to wait till they were seized, but to kill themselves, and thereby prevent the ignominy of a public execution. Nay, Cassius and some of the rest had already laid their hands on their daggers; when Brutus, observing from the gesture and attitude of Popilius, that he rather appeared like a suppliant than accuser, quickly perceived his error; and as he had no opportunity of speaking to his associates in so mixt an assembly, he, by the serenity of his looks and the composure of his countenance, endeavoured to make them know, that they were in no danger. In effect, after some minutes further conversation, Popilius kissed the dictator's hand, and retired; and Cæsar, at last, came into the senate.

HE had no sooner taken his seat, than the conspirators came near him under pretence of saluting; and Cimber, who was one of them, approached him in a suppliant posture, pretending to sue for his brother's pardon, who had been banished by his order. All the conspirators seconded him with great earnestness; and Cimber, seeming to sue with still greater submission, took hold of his robe with both his hands, so as to prevent his rising. This was the signal agreed on. Cæsar, who stood behind, stabbed him, though slightly, in the shoulder.



shoulder. Cæsar turning round, and observing Casca, "Wretch (said he) what are your designs?" and at the same time wounded him in the arm with the stile of his tablet. By this time the conspirators had all taken the alarm, and inclosing him round, he received a second stab from an unknown hand in the breast, while Cassius wounded him in the face. He still defended himself with great vigour, rushing among them, and throwing down such as opposed him, till he saw Brutus among the conspirators, who, coming up, struck his dagger into his thigh. From that moment Cæsar thought no more of defending himself; but looking steadfastly on Brutus, he exclaimed, "And you too, my son?" Cæsar used to call him by that tender name, either on account of the paternal affection he had conceived for him, or because he really believed him to be his son, having formerly carried on an intrigue with his mother, Servilia. Finding now his fate inevitable, he covered his head, and spreading his robe before him in order to fall with the greater decency, he reeled towards Pompey's statue, where he fell, after receiving twenty-three wounds from those whom he vainly supposed he had disarmed by his benefits.

Cæsar was killed in the fifty-sixth year of his age, and he had attained to his fortieth before he began the conquest of Gaul; so that all the great actions, which have immortalized his name, and the proofs he gave of a genius in appearance even more than human, were comprized within the space of about fourteen years. He was certainly born to command mankind, if great qualities alone could entitle him to that distinction. Had his birth or a regular election placed him on a throne, he had doubtless been an example worthy the imitation of all sovereign princes. But his private conduct is by no means entitled to the same praise, his whole life being one continued scene of rapine and extortion, luxury and profusion, and a brutal indulgence in the most criminal pleasures.



## C H A P. XXIII.

*From the Death of CÆSAR, to the Establishment of the IMPERIAL  
POWER in the Person of AUGUSTUS.*

[ANN. ROM. 710.]

AS the conspirators had reason to think, that the majority of the senate approved of their design, they fondly hoped, that, now it was completed, they would have the courage openly to declare in their favour. In this, however, they were greatly disappointed; for when Brutus attempted to harangue them, and explain to them the motives of his own conduct, and that of his associates, they were so far from listening to him with a favourable ear, that they instantly broke up in the greatest confusion. The people, too, hearing of the dictator's death, began to be alarmed, and leaving their usual occupations, ran tumultuously through the city, some for the sake of further information, others to provide for their own safety, but the far greater part with the hope of enriching themselves by plunder. In this disposition of men's minds, the conspirators thought it unsafe for them to make their appearance in public; and they therefore retired to the capitol, which they easily seized, and secured with a body of gladiators belonging to Brutus.

MEANWHILE the friends of the late-dictator, and particularly Antony and Lepidus, observing the present irresolution of the senate, and knowing the strong attachment which the people had always had to Cæsar's person, and the regard they still seemed to retain for his memory, imagined that this was a favourable opportunity for gratifying their ambition under the veil of promoting justice. With this view they took possession of the Forum with a band of soldiers that lay in the neighbourhood; and Antony, as being consul, was permitted to command them. Their first step was to get into their hands all Cæsar's papers and money, which were readily delivered to them by Calphurnia; and their next was to convene the senate.

NEVER had this assembly been convened upon so delicate an occasion, as it was to determine whether Cæsar had been a legal magistrate or a tyrannical usurper; and whether those, who put him to death, deserved rewards or punishment. Some  
thought,



thought, that they not only deserved rewards, but even additional honours and dignities. Others, without mentioning rewards, which, it is probable, the conspirators themselves did not expect, proposed, that public thanks should be returned them; and the least favourable were of opinion, that they ought all of them to be indulged with a pardon. But there were some who observed, that before any thing could be determined concerning the conspirators, it was necessary to inquire into Cæsar's character and conduct; because the treatment the former were to receive would depend upon the idea they should form of the latter.

THE intention of those, who proposed such an inquiry, was to have Cæsar declared a tyrant. Antony easily perceived their aim, and in order to defeat it he started an objection, which, however natural, had never been thought of before. He represented, that if Cæsar was declared a tyrant, his acts and ordinances must of course be repealed. This, he said, was impossible, because those acts affecting the whole empire, the repeal of them would be productive of universal confusion. "But without extending our views so far (added he), let us begin by settling one single point. All of us, who are the leading men of the senate, have received many favours from Cæsar; for 'tis to him we are indebted for the employments we have lately held, which we now hold, or hope shortly to enjoy."

THIS objection made a great change in the sentiments of the assembly. Those, who imagined they had nothing to do but to pass sentence upon Cæsar, began to perceive, that their own private interests were no less concerned than those of the public; and that they could not condemn the memory of the late dictator without running the risk of losing the whole, or at least the greatest part of their fortunes. They therefore readily accepted a proposal that was made them by Antony; and that was, that no farther inquiry should be made into Cæsar's death, and yet that all his acts should be ratified. This proposal, which was soon converted into a decree, contained a gross and manifest contradiction. It, in some measure, declared Cæsar to be both innocent and guilty at the same time; for if he was innocent, his murderers ought to have been punished, and if he was guilty, his acts should not have been confirmed: but as it was calculated to gratify the wishes and to promote the interests of both parties, it was readily adopted. It secured the conspirators from all the danger to which they might have been exposed on account of their putting Cæsar to death, and it left every one in the quiet enjoyment of those honours and dignities, which, by the dictator's bounty, they



already possessed. Nay, it put some of them in possession of fresh honours; for either in consequence of an order which Cæsar had made, or because it was known to be agreeable to his views, the government of Macedonia was bestowed upon Brutus, that of Syria upon Cassius; Asia, properly so called, was assigned to Trebonius, Bithynia to Tullius Cimber, and Decimus Brutus was confirmed in the government of Cisalpine Gaul. To shew their sincerity in this accommodation, Antony and Lepidus, the two leading men on the one side, invited Brutus and Cassius, the most capital characters on the other, to sup with them. The invitation was accepted, and the evening passed with great gaiety and freedom. Only when Antony asked Cassius in jest whether he had still a dagger under his robe, the other replied, “Yes, I have, and a sharp one too, which I shall not scruple to employ against you, if you pursue the steps of the man I have killed.” But though Antony had been the first proposer of this compromise, he had no intention of adhering to it. He only meant it as an artful expedient to gain time until he should be able to put himself in a condition of accomplishing his grand object; and that was the exaltation of his own power under the appearance of revenging the death of Cæsar.

THE first step he took for this purpose was to obtain the consent of the senate to Cæsar’s body being buried publicly, and at the expence of the state, and to have his will carried into complete execution. Brutus too readily agreed to both these measures; but Cassius strongly opposed them, from a conviction, that they would naturally tend to revive the affection of the people for their late dictator, and involve the conspirators in fresh difficulties. Nor was he mistaken in his conjecture; for when Antony began to read to them Cæsar’s will, (in which he had appointed his grand-nephew, Octavius, his successor, and left the people the use of his gardens beyond the Tyber, and to every citizen about two pounds seven shillings in ready money) they were so deeply affected, that instead of considering the dictator as a tyrant, they regarded him as a tender parent, who, not satisfied with doing them good, while alive, thought even of benefiting them after his death. Antony finding things had taken the turn he both wished and expected, now addressed the assembly in a more pathetic strain. He presented to them Cæsar’s bloody robe, and, as he unfolded it, took care they should observe the number of stabs in it: then displaying a waxen image all covered with wounds, which to them appeared to be the body (for the real body was placed on a funeral pile in the midst of the Forum), “This,” cried he, “is all that is left of him who was befriended by the  
gods.



gods, and loved by mankind even to adoration. This is he, to whom we vowed eternal fidelity, and whose person both the senate and people concurred to declare sacred. Behold now the execution of these vows! behold here the proofs of our gratitude! The bravest of men destroyed by the most ungrateful of the species. He, who showered down his favours upon his fellow citizens, found his death as the only reward! Is there none to revenge his cause? Is there none, who, mindful of former favours, will shew himself now deserving of them? Yes, there is one: behold me, O Jupiter, thou avenger of the brave, ready to offer up my life on this glorious occasion. And you, ye deities, protectors of the Roman empire, accept my solemn vows, and favour the rectitude of my intentions." By this time the resentment of the people was wound up to the highest pitch, and they fell upon various methods to express it. Some proposed burning the body of Cæsar in the chapel of Jupiter Capitolinus, and others in the hall where he had been murdered; but the authority of the priests and magistrates prevented these excesses, which might have been the ruin of some of the finest and most sacred edifices in Rome. At this instant two armed men came up to the pile, and set it on fire; and the mob put in practice what they had done about nine years before in burning the body of Clodius. They pulled up the seats of the judges, and the counters of the bankers and shop-keepers, and threw them into the flames. They likewise flung into them the gifts and offerings that had been brought thither, and all the pompous decorations of the funeral. The soldiers also cast in their arms, and some of them their crowns, or other military honours. Nay, the ladies could not refuse to sacrifice their ornaments to Cæsar, and they made their children follow their example. By this time the flames were become so violent as to reach the house of a patrician in the neighbourhood, which was thereby consumed, and several other buildings, both sacred and profane, would have shared the same fate, had not the consuls taken care to prevent it by stationing soldiers in proper places. The rage of the populace continuing still to increase, they ran with flaming brands to the houses of the conspirators, which they endeavoured to set on fire; but these last being prepared to receive them, the others were obliged to retire, though not without threatening to return the next day in much greater numbers. The fury of the mob against Cæsar's murderers proved fatal to one of his friends. This was Helvius Cinna, who coming late to the ceremony, and his name being mentioned, the people mistook him for that Cinna, who was one of the conspirators; and notwithstanding his



his most solemn protestations that he was a quite different person, they tore him in pieces.

SUCH were the effects of the funeral oration, which Antony pronounced in honour of Cæsar. Finding, however, that, by this means, he had forfeited the friendship of the senate, he endeavoured to regain the good-will of that august body, of whose assistance, he foresaw, he might yet stand in need. With this view he abolished the dictatorship, and the honour of the action he reserved entirely to himself. He did not propose the matter to the senate, as was usual, but he brought a decree with him ready drawn up, by which the office and title of dictator were for ever abolished; imprecations were denounced against any one who should attempt to revive it; and a power was given to every citizen to attack and kill him with the most perfect impunity. This was, in some measure, casting a slur upon Cæsar's memory; but the vindication of Cæsar's honour, and the revenge of his death, were with Antony only secondary objects.

AT the same time he was no less serviceable to the senators, in suppressing speedily a seditious mob, that, if not timely checked, might have proved fatal to them. The dictator's ashes having been collected by his freedmen, and deposited in the sepulchre of his ancestors, the people erected an altar on the spot where his body had been burnt; and near the altar they built a marble pillar twenty feet high, with this inscription, *Patri Patriæ*; to the father of his country. There public worship was performed to Cæsar; vows and oaths were confirmed by his name; and libations and sacrifices were offered to him.

THE mob, which daily assembled in this place, was so much the more dangerous, as it was headed by a man of a daring spirit, who for some years had endeavoured, by a gross imposture, to raise himself into notice. He was of low extraction, and named Amatius; but from the resemblance of the name he pretended to be a grandson of the famous Marius, consequently he claimed a consanguinity with the Cæsars; and even during the dictator's life-time he had been hardy enough to broach this falshood, and cunning enough to make it partly succeed. Several ladies that were related to Cæsar, had acknowledged him as their kinsman; and numbers of the people had become his partizans. This happened while Cæsar was engaged in the last Spanish war.

AMATIUS at that time put young Octavius's prudence to a severe trial. Hearing that this favourite nephew of the dictator's was coming to Rome, he went as far as the Janiculum to meet him, attended by all his followers, and demanded



to be treated and acknowledged as a relation. Octavius knew not at first what answer to give. Convinced of the imposture, he was unwilling to authorize it by any act of his, and yet he thought there might be some danger in denying a man with so numerous a retinue. He therefore chose a very wise medium: "Cæsar (said he to the impostor) is the head of our family, as well as of the empire. You should therefore apply to him if you would be acknowledged as a relation. His decision shall be a rule to me, which, you may depend upon it, I will faithfully follow."

WHEN Cæsar returned to Rome, Amatius, so far from concealing himself, had the insolence, in some measure, to vie with him; and when the dictator permitted the people to come and compliment him in his gardens, this wretch placed himself under an adjacent arcade, where he had almost as numerous a court as the other. Cæsar, however, soon put an end to this farce. He enquired into the man's history; and finding him to be no better than a farrier, he banished him from Italy. After Cæsar's death, Amatius appeared again at Rome. He renewed his intrigues with the populace, and pretending to be zealous for the punishment of Cæsar's murderers, he began already to threaten the senate for having suffered them to escape so long. Antony freed them from this uneasiness. He ordered the pretended Marius to be seized, and to be strangled in prison. The senate were alarmed at this military execution; but the benefit arising from it was sufficient, in their eyes, to excuse the great irregularity of the proceeding. The death of Amatius, however, did not restore tranquillity to Rome. The people, though deprived of their leader, still continued to pay religious homage to Cæsar. Dolabella, therefore, the other consul, resolved to cut up this evil by the roots: he overturned at once both the altar and pillar, dispersed the multitude, and having seized the most mutinous among them, he caused such of them as were freemen to be thrown from the top of the Tarpeian rock, and such as were slaves he ordered to be crucified.

THE last proof which Antony gave of his complaisance to the senate, was the readiness with which he agreed to the restoration of Sextus Pompey to his native country. This unhappy representative of the most popular family in Rome, after concealing himself for some time in the mountains of Celtiberia, at last made his appearance; and collecting the scattered remains of the battle of Munda, and being also joined by some other forces, ventured to seize upon several towns in the open country; and though he was attacked by two of Cæsar's lieutenants, Carinas and Pollio, he yet found

means



means to repulse them both. His affairs had already begun to wear a favourable aspect, when he received the news of the dictator's death. This information increased his hopes, and strengthened his party; and he had even the courage to write to Rome, desiring leave to return home, and to be restored to the possession of his property. Antony supported his pretensions in every thing but one, and that was the restoration of his property; for this Antony either possessed, or had squandered away: but he proposed, in lieu of it, that Sextus should be allowed about a million and a half sterling out of the public treasury, and moreover that he should be appointed commodore of the seas, as his father had been before him. Nothing could be more agreeable to the senate than such a proposal. The affair, however, was delayed for some time; but when it was completed, the senate even allowed Sextus more than Antony proposed: they gave him about five millions and a half sterling, which plainly shewed, that their intention was not merely to indemnify him for his loss, but likewise to arm him for the service of the state. Upon this Pompey departed from Spain, though he thought not proper immediately to return to Rome. He made use, however, of his title of commodore, or superintendant of the seas, to assemble all the vessels he could meet with in the ports of Spain or France; and he remained some time at Marseilles to see what turn affairs were likely to take. These indeed were now beginning to assume a new form.

ANTONY pretended, that, by the late steps he had taken, he had exposed himself to the resentment of the people; and he therefore entreated the senate to grant him a guard for the security of his person. The senate consented; but they had no sooner done so, than they had reason to repent of it; for, instead of a guard, Antony contrived to draw about him a body of about six thousand veterans, with which he was able to controul all the proceedings of government.

HAVING thus assembled an army, his next care was to supply himself with money; and for this purpose he fell upon various expedients. Notwithstanding some wholesome decrees, which he himself had caused to be passed, he every day produced a number of pretended ordinances of Cæsar's, which granted privileges, protections and immunities of all kinds; which conferred the right of Roman citizens, not only on particular persons, but on whole cities; which alienated the public revenue; which recalled several who were in exile; in a word, which decreed in favour of kings, states, citizens, or strangers, whatever could produce him any money. And on this occasion he seemed to have lost all sense of shame; for  
having



having at his command one of Cæsar's secretaries, named Faberius, who had formerly been used to counter-sign acts of this kind, he only inquired what profits would arise from the granting of any letters-patent; and if these were considerable, the letters were immediately granted, though the imposture sometimes was so gross and palpable, that Cæsar was made to speak of events that did not take place till after his death. In a word, the house of Antony was now become a general mart for all kinds of offices, favours, and immunities; and money there was so very plentiful, that it went by the weight and not by tale. If to all this we add the sum of one hundred millions of sesterces, which Calphurnia paid him immediately after Cæsar's death, and seven hundred millions of sesterces, which the dictator himself had deposited in the temple of Ops, and which Antony seized, we may be able to form some idea of his immense riches, and consequently of the power he had to accomplish whatever he thought proper to undertake. Besides, he was supported by his two brothers, one of whom was prætor and the other tribune; and he had gained Lepidus to his side, by procuring for him the office of pontifex maximus in the room of Cæsar.

HAVING now concerted the necessary measures, he resolved to attack Brutus and Cassius, for whom he had hitherto professed to entertain the greatest regard. These two chiefs of the conspiracy had always been favourites with the senate; but not thinking themselves in any danger, and depending solely on the protection of the laws, they had taken no care to provide themselves either with men or money. Some of their friends proposed to raise them a military chest by a voluntary subscription among the Roman knights; but after some faint and ineffectual attempts, the scheme came to nothing. Finding themselves, therefore, in such a helpless condition, while the power of Antony was every day increasing, they began to think it was full time to put their party in some state of defence; and as three of their associates had provinces assigned them, and no objection could be made to their going to take possession of them, viz. D. Brutus of Cisalpine Gaul, Trebonius of Asia, properly so called, and Tullius Cimber of Bithynia, they persuaded them to set out immediately, and at the same time to make a sufficient provision of men and money.

BUT as to themselves, they could not so easily determine; for being both of them prætors at that time, they were obliged to reside at Rome, particularly Brutus, who had the city-quarter under his jurisdiction. The governments of Macedonia and Syria had indeed been assigned them; but  
they



they were not to enter upon them till the expiration of their magistracy. Nothing, therefore, could be more distressing than their present situation. If they staid in Rome, their lives were exposed to the most imminent danger, for the city now swarmed with Cæsar's soldiers: if they left it, they would draw upon them the obloquy and reproach of all their enemies, open and concealed. At length, however, after some deliberation, they chose to embrace the latter part of the alternative. Antony, who was as glad to get rid of them as they were to go, justified the irregularity by procuring them a dispensation from the people for their non-residence; and the senate, who wished them well, and sincerely pitied them, endeavoured to prevent any reflections that might be made upon their departure, or rather indeed their flight, by giving them a commission to buy corn for the city in Sicily and Asia.

SCARCELY had they quitted Rome when Antony began to throw off the mask he had hitherto worn; and, in a little time, he stripped them both of their governments. That of Brutus he took himself; the other he bestowed upon his colleague, Dolabella. In a word, it appeared from the whole of his conduct, that his intention was neither to revenge the death of Cæsar, nor to restore the republican government, but to raise himself to the same degree of power which the dictator had usurped. But an obstacle to his ambition arose from a quarter, whence he seems least to have apprehended it. This was from Octavius Cæsar, afterwards called Augustus, the grand-nephew and adopted son of Julius Cæsar. He was at Apollonia when his kinsman was slain. He was then but eighteen years old, and had been sent to Apollonia to improve himself in the study of Greek literature.

UPON the news of Cæsar's death, notwithstanding all the arguments his friends could urge to the contrary, he resolved to return to Rome, to claim the inheritance, and revenge the death of his uncle. From the former professions of Antony, he expected to meet with the most cordial assistance from him; and he doubted not but, by his concurrence, he should be able to take vengeance on all the conspirators. In this, however, he was greatly disappointed. Antony, whose sole aim was to aggrandize himself, gave him but a very cold reception; and instead of granting him readily the fortune left him by the will, he put off the payment of it upon a variety of pretences. But Octavius, who seems to have inherited the spirit and the liberality of his uncle, was so far from making this a plea for delaying the payment of the legacies the dictator had left, that he even sold his own patrimony in order to make them good, and especially that to the people.



By these means he gained a degree of popularity, which his enemies endeavoured in vain to diminish, and which indeed he was extremely well qualified to acquire, as well by his bodily as his mental accomplishments. His conversation was elegant and insinuating; his face comely and graceful; and his affection to the late dictator so sincere, that every body was charmed with his piety, or, which is the same thing, with the well-counterfeited appearance of it: for it is to be presumed, that the revenging of his uncle's death was with him only a secondary object; the exaltation of his own power was the principal end of all his actions.

WHAT contributed still more to increase his popularity was his assuming the name of Cæsar, in consequence of which the former followers of his uncle now flocked to him in great numbers. These he managed with so much address, as to attach them firmly to his interest; so that Antony began to conceive a jealousy of his young opponent. And, in fact, he had reason to do so; for the army near Rome, which had long wished to see the conspirators punished, began to turn from him to his rival, whom, they thought, they saw more sincerely bent upon gratifying their desires. Antony also having procured the government of Hither Gaul from the people, two of his legions, that he had brought home from his late government of Macedonia, went over to Octavius, in spite of all his endeavours to prevent them. This produced, as usual, interviews, complaints, recriminations, and pretended reconciliations, which only tended more to widen the breach between them. Thus the state was divided into three different parties: that of Octavius, who aimed at procuring the inheritance of his uncle, and revenging his death; that of Antony, whose sole view was to render himself master of the empire; and that of the conspirators, who wanted to restore the senate to its former authority; so that the party of the senate and that of the conspirators might be considered as one and the same.

EACH of these parties endeavoured at first to carry on their scheme separately and by their own proper strength; but two of them afterwards were sometimes obliged to unite, in order to overpower the third, though this they had no sooner done, than they began to quarrel and to turn their arms against one another. As the party of Antony appeared in the beginning to be the most powerful, and consequently the most dangerous, a kind of union took place between Octavius and the senate, to check the ambition of that demagogue. Accordingly Octavius marched against him into Hither Gaul, which he had seized, after having driven out D. Brutus, the former



former governor, and even besieged him in Mutina. The senate ordered Antony to evacuate the province, and raise the siege: but the latter, proud of his great strength, and elated with the advantage he had gained over Brutus, refused to comply; upon which the senate declared him a public enemy, and commanded Octavius to pursue him as such. He did so; and after some ineffectual skirmishes, the two armies came to a general engagement, in which Antony was compleatly defeated, and obliged to fly to Lepidus, who commanded a body of forces in Farther Gaul.

THIS victory, however, which promised the senate so much success, produced effects very different from what they expected. The two consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, who were in the action, were mortally wounded; but the latter, before his death, called Octavius to his bed-side, and spoke to him thus: “The life of your father was always dearer to me than my own. If, like yourself, I adhered to the senate from prudential motives, yet I always cherished a desire, and hoped one day to meet with an opportunity of revenging his death. Mine, which is now impending, deprives me of that consolation; but before I close my eyes, I will at least acquit myself to the son of the obligations I owe to the father. Know, then, that you are as much suspected by the senate, as Antony your enemy. They detest you as well as him; they were overjoyed at your late dissensions, and hoped, by that means, to effect the ruin of both. The only reason of their declaring for you was, that they believed your party the weakest, and consequently the easiest to be destroyed. My design, far different from theirs, was to compel Antony to a reconciliation with you, afterwards to join our armies, and then revenge together the murder of our common benefactor. This is the only course you can either in prudence or gratitude take. Join, therefore, with Antony, whom you will find less haughty now than he was before his late overthrow.”

THE advice of the dying consul made a deep impression upon the mind of Octavius, who, from that time forward, only sought for a plausible pretext to break with the senate. Their giving the command of a part of his army to Decimus Brutus, in order to pursue Antony, and their denying him a triumph soon after, served to alienate his mind entirely from them, and made him resolve to join Antony and Lepidus. He was willing, however, to make one trial more of their sentiments before he came to an open rupture. With this view he sent to demand the consulship; and in order to render his request the more palatable, he begged he might have Cicero for his colleague; that so, as he said, he might have



an opportunity of studying the art of government under so great a master. Notwithstanding this palliative, his demand was rejected; upon which Octavius, thinking himself freed from all obligations to keep any further measures with the senate, sent privately to Antony and Lepidus, proposing a junction of their forces, and attacking their common enemies with their united strength. This proposal was eagerly accepted; and the two former generals, being now sure of the assistance of Octavius, upon their arrival in Italy, immediately crossed the Alps, with an army of seventeen legions.

THE senate, at last, began to be sensible of their error in daring to offend Octavius: they therefore gave him the consulship, which they had so lately refused; and to prevent his joining with Antony, they flattered him with new honours, and gave him a power superior to all law. The first use he made of his new authority, was to procure a law, condemning all the conspirators, and particularly Brutus and Cassius; and then to join his forces with those of Antony and Lepidus.

THE meeting of these usurpers of their country's freedom was in a small island of the river Panarus, near Mutina, now called Modena. Eager as they were for an union, they were yet afraid to meet in a more open and unguarded place; so little confidence had they to place in one another. Lepidus entered the island first; and finding all things safe, made the signal for the other two to approach. Upon their first meeting they embraced each other; and Augustus began the conference by thanking Antony for his zeal in putting Decimus Brutus to death; who being deserted by his army, was taken as he was endeavouring to escape into Macedonia, and beheaded by Antony's order.

THEY then entered upon the business which they had met to settle, without taking any review of the past. Their conference lasted for three days; and, in this period (to use an expression of Plutarch's), they divided the Roman empire among them, as if it had been their patrimonial estate. They first resolved, that the supreme authority should be lodged in their hands, under the title of the Triumvirate, for the space of five years; that Antony should have Gaul; Lepidus, Spain; and Octavius, Africa, and the Mediterranean Islands. As for Italy, and the eastern provinces, they were to remain in common, until their general enemy was entirely subdued.

BUT the last article of their union was a dreadful one. It was agreed that all their enemies should be destroyed, of which each presented a list. In these were comprized, not only the enemies, but the friends of the triumvirate, since the friends of the one were often found among the enemies of  
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of the other. Thus Lepidus gave up his brother Paulus to the vengeance of his colleagues; Antony consented to the proscription of his uncle Lucius; and Octavius delivered up the famous Cicero, to whom he lay under the greatest obligations. The most sacred rights of nature were violated: three hundred senators and above two thousand knights were included in this terrible proscription, which is said to have been more bloody than even that of Sylla; their fortunes were confiscated, and their murderers enriched with the spoil. Rome soon felt the effects of this infernal union; nothing but cries and lamentations were to be heard through all the city, scarce a house escaping without a murder. No man dared to refuse entrance to the assassins, though he had no other way of defending either himself or his friends. Whoever harboured or assisted any of the proscribed, was subject to the same punishment as the proscribed themselves: and as to such of them as had no fortune, their murderers were rewarded with a gratuity of an hundred thousand sesterces; and if it was a slave that put them to death, he was to have forty thousand sesterces, together with his liberty.

Among the victims of the cruelty of the triumvirs, Cicero was, on many accounts, one of the first. Not only himself, (as we have already observed) but his son, his brother, his nephew; in a word, all those who had any connection with him, either by blood or friendship, had been proscribed. He could not promise himself a better fate; and he well knew he had no more reason to hope for favour from Antony, than Brutus and Cassius had to expect it from Octavius. He therefore quitted Rome on the approach of the triumvirs; and his first design was to cross the sea with his brother, and go to Brutus's camp in Macedonia. They travelled together for some time, mutually deploring their common misfortune; but as their departure had been precipitate, they wanted many necessaries. Quintus, therefore, the brother, went back to procure them; and Cicero continued his journey to Gaeta, when, hearing nothing of Quintus, he embarked. Sometimes, however, the contrary winds, and sometimes the agitation of the waves, which he was little able to support, obliged him to land. At last, finding himself quite tired of flying, and even of life itself, he returned to a country-house, which he had about a mile from the sea—"I must die, said he, in my native country, which I have so often saved." He then went to bed, and slept some time; but his servants hearing of the approach of the enemy, forced him up, and endeavoured to carry him back to the ship. Hardly had they departed, when the assassins arrived, and perceiving him



him to be fled, they pursued him immediately, and overtook him on the road. They were headed by one Popilius Lenus, a tribune of the army, whose life Cicero had formerly defended and saved; and who now, in return, accepted a commission to kill his benefactor. As soon as the soldiers appeared, the servants prepared to defend their master's life, at the hazard of their own; but Cicero commanded them to set him down, and to make no resistance. They soon cut off his head and hands, and returned with them to Rome, as a most agreeable present to their cruel employer. Antony received them with a savage joy; and after feasting his eyes with them for some time, he ordered them to be fixed upon the rostrum, a place whence Cicero had often spoken with an eloquence that was never yet excelled, and hardly ever equalled.

POSTERITY, however, has done justice to his memory, and has revenged his cause upon his cruel murderer. No death was ever more bitterly deplored than that of the man, who had done so much honour to letters. Poets, orators, and historians, have all signalized themselves in bewailing the unhappy fate of Cicero; and, by a natural consequence, have poured out the keenest reproaches against his savage assassin. We find in the works of Seneca the elder a great many fragments of orators and historians, who have exercised their talents upon this subject. Velleius Paterculus, as great a flatterer as he was, allows himself here to be carried away by his zeal, to interrupt the thread of his narrative, and to quit the stile of an historian, and assume that of a declaimer, in order to inveigh against Antony's cruelty. Pliny the elder expresses himself very strongly upon it, though very briefly affirming, that Cicero was not proscribed by Antony, but that Antony proscribed himself, and exposed himself to eternal infamy by this barbarous action.

THE triumvirs, when they published their proscription, declared, that no person should be exposed to danger on account of his wealth; but it soon appeared that this was a mere pretence. They not only seized the property of the men, they even extended their avarice to the women. They pitched upon fourteen hundred of the richest women in Rome, whom they ordered to give an account of their fortunes, that so they might be taxed in proportion.

THIS hardship, however, was, in some measure, warded off; or, at least, it was considerably lessened by the spirit and address of the ladies themselves. They first applied to Octavia, the sister of young Cæsar, and to Julia, the mother of Antony, from both of whom they received very flattering promises;



promises; but having been haughtily treated by Fulvia, Antony's wife, a proud and arrogant woman, they were so pierced, that they resolved to go to the Forum, and apply to the triumvirs in person. A respect for their birth and rank having engaged the mob, and even the guards, to separate and make room for them, they approached the tribunal, and Hortensia, the daughter of the orator Hortensius, addressed the triumvirs in the following terms—"We followed," said she, "the laws of modesty, which become us, in making our application first to persons of our own sex, in hopes, that by their means we might obtain justice. But having been treated by Fulvia with an indecent arrogance, we are now reduced to the disagreeable necessity of addressing ourselves to you. You have taken from us our fathers, our children, our husbands and brothers; and if you also take from us our fortunes, you will reduce us to a situation, that is neither suitable to our birth, nor our manner of living. If you think we have done you an injury, why do you not boldly proscribe us as well as the men? But if the very weakness of our sex exempts us from such an imputation; if we have neither declared any of you enemies to the public, nor corrupted the fidelity of your soldiers, nor sent armies against you, nor thrown any difficulties in the way of your acquiring those honours and offices which you possess; why should we have any share in the punishment, who have had none in the offence? Why should we be loaded with taxes who neither dispute with you the command of the legions, nor the authority of the state?"

"But you tell us, that you have a war to support. And, pray, when have men been free from wars? And yet has any of them ever thought of imposing, on that account, a tax upon women? The universal consent of mankind has confirmed this exception in our favour, which nature herself seems to have granted us. Our ancestors, it is true, in the exigencies of the state, when attacked by Hannibal, contributed towards the expences of the public; but they did it voluntarily. What they gave was not levied upon their estates, their dowries and houses, resources without which free women cannot live. They only contributed to it the ornaments of their persons. They were neither subject to any estimation, nor to the cruelty of informers. They were perfectly free from all force and constraint; they not only determined upon what they were to give, but likewise upon the manner of raising it. What then is the danger that now threatens the empire? If there were a war with the Gauls or Parthians, you should find us ready to imitate the example of our ancestors; but heaven forbid



forbid, that ever we should help you, by our contributions, to destroy and extirpate one another. We were charged with no taxes in the war between Cæsar and Pompey. Neither Cinna, nor Marius, nor even Sylla himself, that cruel tyrant, ever thought of imposing such a hardship upon us."

THOUGH this speech did not procure them an entire exemption from the tax, it yet helped considerably to diminish it; for instead of fourteen hundred, the triumvirs were content with taxing only four hundred women, though they made up the deficiency by extending the tax to a greater number of men, about a hundred thousand of whom were compelled to furnish supplies to the subversion of their country's freedom. At last, both the avarice and vengeance of the triumvirs being satisfied, they went to the senate, and declared, that the proscription was finished; and thus having deluged the city with blood, Octavius and Antony left Lepidus to defend Rome in their absence, while they themselves should lead their forces against the conspirators, who were now at the head of a formidable army in Asia.

BRUTUS and Cassius, the principal of these, had quitted Italy, not only without an army, but even without any prospect of raising one. But having gone to Athens, they persuaded the Roman students, who were prosecuting their studies there, to declare for their country; and having thus begun to collect forces, they soon succeeded so far in their levies, that at length they found means to assemble an army sufficient to enable them to maintain a contest, even where the empire of the world was at stake. Their first intention was to go against Cleopatra, who was making preparations to assist their enemies; but hearing that Octavius and Antony were approaching, they resolved to stop short, and oppose them.

AFTER having been absent from each other for some time, in order to have the wider range for making their levies, they at last met at Sardis, where they resolved to have a conference before they proceeded any farther. They accordingly shut themselves up in the first convenient house they found, and gave orders to their servants to admit no person to them. Brutus began by reprimanding Cassius for having bestowed upon his favourites some important offices, which should ever be the reward of merit, and for having over taxed the tributary states. Cassius retorted the imputation of avarice with the more bitterness, as he knew the charge to be altogether groundless. The debate grew so warm, that, from high words, they burst into tears. Their friends, who were standing at the door, overheard the increasing vehemence of their voices, and began to be apprehensive for the consequences, till Favonius,



nus, who valued himself upon a cynical boldness, entered the room with a jest, and calmed their animosity. The characters of these two great men, though so closely united, were extremely different. Cassius was, no doubt, a man of abilities, but of a passionate, unequal temper, naturally harsh in his commands; but so indulgent to his friends, that he would sometimes sacrifice to them all the laws of justice: he was not averse to pleasure in private company, and, upon the whole, his morals were not quite sincere. But the conduct of Brutus was always perfectly steady. An uniform gentleness, a noble elevation of sentiments, a strength of mind, over which neither passion nor pleasure could have any influence; an inflexible firmness in the defence of justice, composed the character of that great man. In consequence of these qualities, he was beloved by his army, doated upon by his friends, admired by all good men, and not hated even by those who made war against him.

THE perfect confidence which all men had in the purity of his intentions, is what chiefly gained him their love and veneration. This is a glory peculiar to himself, and that distinguishes him from the other leaders of parties in the civil wars of the Romans. For it is not thought that Pompey would ever have been inclined to restore the sovereign power to the people, had he conquered Cæsar. It is generally believed he would have kept himself at the head of the government, under the name of consul and dictator, or some other title of magistracy, that would have thrown a decent veil over his ambition, and amused the vulgar. Many people think, that Cassius had a design of the same nature; and though his aversion to tyranny cannot be doubted, yet it is difficult to believe, that a man of so proud and haughty a disposition would have engaged in a war, and exposed himself to all the dangers with which it is necessarily attended, merely to re-establish his fellow citizens in the enjoyment of their liberties. If we ascend still higher, neither Marius nor Cinna can be said to have fought for their country: they looked upon it rather as a prize, or a prey, upon which they wished to seize; and they almost frankly owned, that the acquisition of sovereign power was the object of their wishes. But Brutus is perfectly free from any suspicion of this kind: even his greatest enemies did him justice in this point; and Antony was frequently heard to say, that, of all those who engaged in the conspiracy against Cæsar, Brutus was the only one, that was actuated by public motives; the rest were influenced by private interest.

AFTER the conference between Brutus and Cassius, the latter invited the former to an entertainment, where freedom  
and



and chearfulness, for a while, took place of political anxiety, and softened the severity of wisdom. Upon retiring home it was that Brutus, as Plutarch informs us, saw a spectre in his tent. He naturally slept but little; and this wakeful disposition he increased by habit and sobriety. He never allowed himself to sleep in the day-time, as was then common in Rome, and only gave so much of the night to rest, as could barely repair the waste of nature. But especially now, when oppressed with such a load of cares, he only slept a short time after his nightly repast, which was his only one; and waking about midnight, generally read or studied till morning. It was in the dead of night, when the whole camp was perfectly quiet, that Brutus was thus employed in reading by a lamp that was just expiring. On a sudden he thought he heard a noise, as if some body entered, and looking towards the door perceived a gigantic figure, with a frightful aspect, place itself before him without uttering a word. At last Brutus had courage to speak to it—"Who art thou? (said he)—Art thou a demon, or a mortal man? And why comest thou to me?"—"Brutus, (replied the phantom) I am thy evil genius; thou shalt see me again at Philippi."—"Well then, (answered Brutus, without being discomposed) we shall meet again." Upon this the phantom vanished; and Brutus called to his servants, and asked if they had seen any thing; to which receiving an answer in the negative, he again resumed his studies. But as he was struck with so strange an appearance, he mentioned it the next day to Cassius, who being an Epicurean, and consequently believing neither in spirits nor providence, represented it as the effect of an imagination, overheated with too intense study. Brutus seemed satisfied with this solution of the matter; and as Antony and Octavius had now arrived in Macedonia, Brutus and his colleague came over from Asia into Thrace, and advanced to the city of Philippi, near which the forces of the triumvirs were posted.

ALL mankind now began to regard with terror the approach of two such mighty armies. Their fate, they saw, must ultimately depend upon the issue of a battle; as from victory on the one side they had to expect freedom; but from that on the other slavery and subjection. Brutus was the only man, who looked upon these great events before him with calmness and tranquillity. Indifferent as to success, and satisfied with having done his duty, he said, in a letter to Atticus, a little before the battle: "My condition is now as happy as I could wish. If I gain the victory, I shall restore liberty to my country; if I lose, I shall at least, by dying, deliver myself



myself from slavery. Thus I run no risk; my resolution is fixed; and the only uncertainty that remains is, whether I shall live free, or carry my liberty with me to the grave. It is Mark Antony, that henceforth must suffer for his folly. He might have been put in the same rank with Brutus, Cassius, and Cato; but he chose rather to degrade himself to an inferior station, and to be second to Octavius, with whom, however, he must one day fight, unless he now happens to be overcome by us."

THE republican army consisted of eighty thousand foot, and twenty thousand horse. The army of the triumvirs amounted to an hundred thousand foot, and thirteen thousand horse. Thus complete, on both sides, they met, and encamped near Philippi, a city on the confines of Thrace. The republicans posted their troops upon two adjacent hills; the triumvirs took their station in the plains below. It was, therefore, the interest of the former to avoid a battle as long as possible, and to harass the enemy by continual skirmishes: the latter, on the other hand, endeavoured to bring on an engagement as soon as they could; and in this they at last succeeded. Cassius, indeed, who was fully sensible of the advantage of his situation, strenuously insisted upon protracting the war; but Brutus, who began to suspect the fidelity of some of his officers, was no less eager for bringing it to a conclusion. "I am impatient (said he) to put an end to the miseries of mankind; and in this I hope to succeed, whether I conquer or not."

AT length Brutus was able to bring over Cassius to the same way of thinking with himself; and the army accordingly was drawn up in array: the generals then gave the signal for engaging, but previous to the action they had a short conference. Cassius asked Brutus how he intended to act in case he should be defeated. To this Brutus replied, "That he had formerly, in his writings, condemned the death of Cato, and maintained, that avoiding calamities by suicide, was an insolent attempt against heaven that sent them; but he had now altered his opinion, and having given up his life to his country, he thought he had a right to his own way of ending it: he was therefore resolved to change a miserable being here, for a better hereafter, if fortune turned against him."—"Well said, my friend, (cried Cassius, embracing him) now we may venture to face the enemy; for either we shall be conquerors ourselves, or we shall have no cause to fear those that are so."

BRUTUS commanded the right wing of the army; Cassius the left. The former was opposed by Octavius, or rather by the troops of Octavius; for that triumvir being sick, or at least pretending to be so, was not in the action. Cassius, on the other hand, was opposed



posed by Antony, who made a dreadful irruption upon the lines of his opponent; and penetrating to his camp, he at last stormed and took it. Brutus did the same with the troops of Octavius, and in a little time likewise he took possession of his camp. But delaying too long to return to the field of battle, Cassius began to conclude that his colleague had been as unsuccessful as himself, and he therefore retired to his tent in despair, and put an end to his life. Brutus was overwhelmed with grief when he heard of the death of Cassius. He embraced the body, and bathed it with his tears; he said that Cassius was *the last of the Romans*, and that Rome would never again produce such another heroic defender of liberty. He then caused the body to be wrapped up decently, and to be carried to the island of Thasos, there to receive the last honours, lest the funeral solemnity, if performed in the camp, should tend to weaken the courage of the soldiers.

It was only the precipitate despair and false heroism of Cassius that gave the advantage to the triumvirs; for, till then, both sides may be said to have been upon an equality; or rather the republicans had the superiority. The left wing of both armies was defeated, and one of the camps of each party was forced and plundered. But the number of slain on the side of the triumvirs was double of what it was on that of the republicans; the former losing sixteen thousand men, the latter only eight thousand. Besides, the camp, which Brutus took, being common to the two armies of Antony and Octavius, proved a greater loss to them, than the camp which Antony took from Cassius, proved to the republicans; for that camp belonged to Cassius alone: whilst the camp of Brutus remained perfectly entire, and furnished a secure retreat to their army. The rashness of Cassius alone made the balance incline in favour of that side, which, in other respects, was the most unsuccessful. It deprived the republicans of their most skilful general, and Brutus of a companion, who was extremely useful to him in directing his military operations. It also gave fresh spirits to the enemy, who, before they heard of this event, were greatly dismayed. But when a slave of Cassius came to inform them of it, and brought with him, as proofs, the coat of arms and sword of his master, they again resumed their former courage, and thought they were now abundantly able to make head against their enemies.

THE first care of Brutus, when he became the sole general, was to assemble the dispersed troops of Cassius, and animate them with fresh hopes of victory. As they had lost their all by the plundering of their camp, he promised them two thousand denarii a man, in order to make up the loss they



had suffered. This was the most effectual way of inspiring them with new ardour. They admired the magnificence of such a gift, and with shouts of applause declared, that he alone of all the generals was invincible and victorious. Still, however, he could not trust them sufficiently to lead them against the adversary, who the very next day offered him battle. His scheme was to starve his enemies, who were in extreme want of provisions, their fleet having been lately defeated. But his single opinion was not sufficient to withstand the united inclinations of his army, who every day grew more confident of their strength, and more eager for a new engagement. At last, therefore, after an interval of twenty days, he was obliged to comply with their solicitations, and to try the fate of a battle. Both armies being drawn up, they remained a long while opposite to each other without offering to engage. Brutus did not observe among his troops that air of joy and alacrity, which he had perceived upon former occasions. The cavalry were in no hurry to begin, and seemed to wait till the infantry should shew them the example. He himself is said to have lost much of his natural ardour by having again seen the spectre the night preceding. However, he encouraged his men as much as possible, and gave the signal for battle within three hours of sun-set. He had, as usual, the advantage where he commanded in person. At the head of his infantry, he bore down the enemy, and, supported by his cavalry, made a dreadful slaughter among them. But his left wing, fearing to be taken in flank, stretched itself out in order to enlarge its front, by which means the middle became too weak to resist the violent efforts that were made by the enemy. It was there that the army began to give way; and Antony pushing forward drove the enemy so far back as to be able to turn and attack Brutus in rear. The troops, which had belonged to Cassius, still trembling with the memory of their late defeat, communicated their terror to the rest of the forces, till at last the whole army began to fly. Brutus, surrounded by the bravest of his officers, fought for a long while with incredible valour. It was here that the son of Cato made amends, by a glorious death, for the follies of his youth. For he had not imitated the discretion and modesty of his father; but had formed a connection with a Cappadocian woman, that exposed him to a good deal of raillery. On this occasion, however, he appeared worthy of the blood, from which he was sprung, and shewed, that it is much easier to resist the fears of danger, and even of death, than the allurements of pleasure. He was always seen in the heat of the engagement, and, though overpowered by numbers, he neither re-  
treated



treated nor fled: but calling aloud to his enemies, and repeatedly pronouncing his own name and that of his father, he fell, at last, upon a heap of dead bodies, with which the ground around him was covered. The brother of Cassius shared the same fate; and Brutus, at last, seeing it in vain to make any farther resistance, was obliged to yield to necessity, and fly. This, however, he found it very difficult to do; for the triumvirs had given express orders not to suffer him by any means to escape; and in all probability he would have been taken, had it not been for the generosity of his friend Lucilius, who resolved, by his own death, to save the life of his general. Upon perceiving a body of Thracian horse closely pursuing Brutus, and just upon the point of seizing him, he boldly threw himself in their way, telling them that he was Brutus. The Thracians, overjoyed with so great a prize, immediately dispatched some of their companions, with the news of their success, to Antony; for Lucilius, the better to carry on the deception, had begged to be carried to that triumvir, who was his old friend, and not to Octavius, who had always been his enemy. Upon this, the ardour of the pursuit cooled, and Antony marched out to meet his enemy. He was followed by a great number of officers and soldiers, some silently deploring the fate of so virtuous a man, others highly blaming him for degenerating so far from the glory of his ancestors, as to suffer himself, from a mean love of life, to become a captive to his enemy. When Antony saw the Thracians approach, he was at a loss to know in what manner he should receive Brutus; for though naturally of a passionate and fiery disposition, he had a great deal of generosity in his temper. But Lucilius eased him of this difficulty, by stepping forward and saying—"It is not Brutus that is taken; fortune has not yet had the power of committing such an outrage upon virtue. You will find Brutus, dead or alive, always worthy of himself. I have deceived your soldiers, and passed myself upon them for him; and I am here ready to suffer whatever punishment you may think proper to inflict upon me." At this the joy of the Thracians, who had captured Lucilius, was changed into shame and indignation, and they seemed altogether confounded. "Be not troubled at the mistake, (said Antony to them) you have taken a much better prize than that you were in quest of. You wanted to take an enemy, and you have brought me a friend. I take all the gods to witness, that I should have been very much puzzled how to behave to Brutus. But men, such as Lucilius, I love much better to have for my friends than my enemies." So saying, he stretched out his hand to Lucilius,



embraced him cordially, and committed him to the charge of one of his friends, whom he ordered to take care of him. Lucilius ever after continued attached to Antony, and served him with the same fidelity as he had served Brutus.

In the mean time Brutus, with a small number of his friends, passed over a rivulet, and, night coming on, sat down under a rock, which concealed him from the pursuit of the enemy. After taking breath for a short time, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, that was all spangled with stars, and repeated a line from Euripides, containing a wish to the gods, "That he who was the occasion of all these calamities might meet with the punishment he deserved!" To this he added another from the same poet: "O virtue! thou empty name; I have worshipped thee as a real good, but thou art only the slave of fortune." He then called to mind, with much concern, those whom he had seen perish in battle; and thinking that the number of slain was not so great as was commonly imagined, he sent out Statilius to bring him information as to that particular; but Statilius never returned, being killed by a party of the enemy's horse. Brutus, judging very rightly of his fate, now resolved to die likewise, and earnestly intreated those who stood round him to lend him their last sad assistance. None of them, however, could be persuaded to do him so melancholy a piece of service. And in order, if possible, to divert him from his present intention, one of them observed that it was not safe to stay longer where they were, that they ought to fly. "Yes, (replied Brutus briskly) it is necessary to fly; but it must be with the assistance of the hands, and not of the feet." In pronouncing these words, he raised himself, and stretching out his hands to those around him, said, "That he was happy in the fidelity of his friends; happy in the consciousness of his own virtue; and though he fell, yet was his death more glorious than the triumphs of the enemy, since they were successful in destroying, he failed in defending the liberties of his country. He concluded by exhorting them to consult their own safety. He then retired to a little distance with two or three persons, one of whom was Strato Egeates, his master in rhetoric. This man he entreated to assist him in putting an end to his own life. Strato, however, discovered great reluctance to take upon him so shocking an office. Brutus, therefore, seeing him so averse, called to one of his slaves to perform what he so ardently desired; but Strato then offered himself, crying out, "that it should never be said, that Brutus, in his last extremity, stood in need of a slave for want of a friend." So saying, and turning away his face, he presented the sword's



sword's point to Brutus, who threw himself upon it, and instantly expired.

ANTONY, who was naturally humane, and never cruel but when transported by passion, caused the last honours to be performed to the body of Brutus, and the ashes to be sent to Rome to his mother Lucilia. But Octavius, who was much less generous, had taken care to have the head severed from the body before the funeral, and he intended to send it to Rome to be thrown at the foot of Caesar's statue: it was lost, however, in the passage to Italy.

As to Portia, Cato's daughter, and Brutus's wife, she no sooner heard of the death of her husband, than she is said to have killed herself by swallowing burning coals. This story, however, though generally credited, is supposed to be false; and the more probable opinion is, that she died before Brutus, of a lingering disease, with which she had, for some time, been afflicted.

FROM this time the triumvirs began to act as absolute sovereigns, alike regardless of the good opinion of the senate or the people. Their first care was to wreak their vengeance upon those who had formerly incurred their displeasure, and from whom they still feared to meet with opposition; and some of these acts of severity were attended with the most barbarous circumstances. Hortensius, Lucullus, Quintilius Varus, and Volumnius, all men of the first rank in the commonwealth, either killed themselves, or were slain. A senator and his son petitioned for their lives; they were told that one of them must suffer, and they were desired to cast lots which should be the man: but they generously rejected so barbarous an offer; the father gave himself up to the executioner, and the son stabbed himself before his face. Another begged to have the rites of burial after his death; to which Augustus replied, "That he should find a grave in the vultures that devoured him."

BUT of all those that perished upon this occasion, the death of Livius Drusus was perhaps the most remarkable. He was the father of Livia, who was soon after married to Octavius, and whose son, Tiberius, was afterwards raised to the empire. Yet this very Drusus was obliged to kill himself, to avoid falling into the hands of the man that was going to be his son-in-law. Nor is it probable that he would have obtained a pardon, had he applied for it; for Octavius, who was the author of most of these cruelties, was determined to make away with all those that were likely to oppose him in his ambitious projects; and Drusus had always adhered to the republican party.



THE triumvirs having now established their authority at home, began to extend their views to the remote parts of the empire. Antony went into Greece, to regulate affairs in that quarter. He thence passed over into Asia, where all the monarchs of the East, who acknowledged the Roman power, came to pay their court to him; while the fairest princesses strove to gain his favour by the greatness of their presents, or the allurements of their beauty. In this manner he proceeded from kingdom to kingdom, attended by a crowd of sovereigns, and every where exacting immense contributions. The sums he is said to have collected upon this occasion, amounted to two hundred thousand talents, that is, to upwards of thirty-seven millions and a half of our money.

NOR was he less liberal of his favours than cruel in his exactions. He presented the kingdom of Cappadocia to Syfames, merely on account of the beauty of Galaphyra, his mother. He settled Herod in the kingdom of Judea, and supported him against every rival. But of all the sovereigns of the East, who partook of his bounty, none had so large a share as Cleopatra, the celebrated queen of Egypt.

THIS princess was accused of having assisted the conspirators. Antony now summoned her before him to answer for her conduct. This summons she readily obeyed, depending as well upon the goodness of her cause (for the accusation was false) as upon the power of her beauty. She had already experienced the force of her charms upon Cæsar and Pompey's eldest son; and she made no doubt of being able to add Antony to the list of her admirers.

ANTONY was in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, when Cleopatra resolved to attend his court in person. She sailed down the river Cydnus, at the mouth of which the city stood, with the most sumptuous pageantry. The stern of her galley was covered with gold; the sails were of purple silk, large, and floating in the wind; the oars, of silver, kept time to the sound of flutes and cymbals, which were used instead of trumpets and other warlike instruments. She herself lay reclined on a couch spangled with stars of gold, and with such ornaments as poets and painters usually ascribe to Venus. On each side were boys like Cupids, who fanned her by turns; while the most beautiful nymphs, dressed like nereids and graces, were placed at proper distances around her. Upon the banks were kept burning the richest perfumes, while an infinite number of people gazed upon the sight with a mixture of delight and admiration. It happened as Cleopatra had foreseen: Antony was instantly captivated with her beauty, and abandoning



doing business to satisfy his passion, shortly after followed her into Egypt.

WHILE he was thus squandering away his time in idle amusements and vicious pleasures, Octavius returned to Rome with the veterans, in order to settle them in the lands that had been promised them. This, however, was no easy matter, as they could not be put in possession of their new grants, without turning out the inhabitants. The consequence was, that multitudes of women, with children in their arms, whose tender years and innocence excited universal compassion, daily filled the temples and the streets with their distresses. What rendered the matter still worse, the soldiers were not satisfied with the lands that were assigned them; they wanted to seize on the possessions of their neighbours, and when opposed, they were apt to proceed to the most brutal acts of violence, even to the downright commission of murder. This was the treatment the poet Virgil had well nigh met with. By the interest of Mæcenas he had obtained an exemption from the general confiscation; but being settled in the neighbourhood of one Arius, a centurion, who wanted to enlarge the limits of his estate, that ruffian contrived to pick a quarrel with him; and in the contest would probably have killed him, had he not found means to escape the danger by a precipitate flight.

STILL farther to increase the difficulty, a petty war now broke out about this very division of the lands. Fulvia, the wife of Antony, alledged, that her husband ought to have a share in the distribution as well as Octavius; and in this claim she was supported by her brother-in-law, Lucius, who was then consul. Octavius offered to refer the matter to the veterans themselves; but Lucius rejected this proposal; and being now at the head of six legions, chiefly composed of such as were dispossessed, he resolved to compel the enemy to accept of whatever terms he pleased.

MATTERS being come to this extremity, Octavius drew out his forces; and dividing them into armies, hemmed in Lucius in such a manner, as to oblige him to surrender at discretion. Having thus finished the war in a few months, he returned to Rome in triumph.

ANTONY, hearing of the defeat of his brother, and his wife's being forced to abandon Italy, was determined to oppose Augustus. He accordingly sailed, at the head of a considerable fleet, from Alexandria to Tyre; from thence to Cyprus and Rhodes, and had an interview with Fulvia, his wife, at Athens. He blamed her greatly for having excited the late disturbance; expressed the utmost contempt for her person;



person ; and leaving her upon her death-bed at Sycion, hastened into Italy to fight Octavius.

THEY met at Brundisium ; and it was now feared that the flames of a civil war were going to burst out once more. The forces of Antony were numerous, but not well disciplined, being mostly new-raised ; however he was assisted by Sextus Pompeius, who, in these civil contests, was every day growing into power. Octavius was at the head of those veterans, who had always been invincible, but who seemed rather averse to fight against Antony, their old general. A negociation, therefore, was instantly set on foot, and a reconciliation. All offences on either side were forgiven ; and, to cement the union, a marriage was concluded between Antony (now become a widower by the death of Fulvia), and Octavia, the sister of Octavius. A new division of the Roman empire was made between them : Octavius was to have the command of the west ; Antony, of the east ; and Lepidus was obliged to be content with the provinces of Africa.

As to Sextus Pompeius, he was allowed to retain all the islands he already possessed, together with Peloponnesus : he was also granted the privilege of standing for the consulship, though absent, and of discharging the duties of it by proxy. It was likewise stipulated to leave the sea open, and to pay the people the corn that was due to them out of Sicily. Thus a general peace was concluded, to the great satisfaction of the people, who thought they were now delivered from all their calamities. In this, however, they were greatly disappointed ; for Octavius having formed a scheme for taking into his own hand the whole power of the state, determined to get rid of all those that were likely to oppose him. He first contrived to remove young Pompey, who was totally defeated in a naval engagement, and soon after slain. He then exerted himself with so much address, that he persuaded all the soldiers of Lepidus to desert their general, and to range themselves under his standard.

ANTONY was now the only remaining obstacle to the accomplishment of his ambitious views, and him he resolved effectually to remove in the same manner as he had done Lepidus. With this view he endeavoured to render his character as contemptible at Rome as possible. Antony's own conduct, indeed, was such as helped very much to promote the designs of his ambitious colleague. He had marched against the Parthians with a prodigious army, but was forced to return with the loss of one fourth of his forces, and all his baggage. This tended greatly to hurt his reputation ; but  
his



his entering Alexandria in triumph on account of this very expedition, served to render him completely ridiculous. Antony, however, seemed equally regardless of the contempt or resentment of his countrymen. Alive only to pleasure, and totally disregarding the business of the state, he spent whole days and nights in the company of Cleopatra, who was every day transforming herself into new characters, in order to amuse. At one time she was a queen, at another a bacchanal, and at a third a huntress. She invented a society called the Inimitable, in which the members were to contend for a prize; and that was always adjudged to the person that made the most sumptuous entertainments. Not satisfied with sharing, in her company, all the delights which Egypt could afford, Antony was resolved to enlarge the sphere of his enjoyments, by granting her many of those kingdoms which belonged to the Roman empire. He gave her all Phœnicia, Tyre and Sidon, Celo-Syria and Cyprus, with a great part of Cilicia, Arabia, and Judæa; gifts which he had no right to bestow, but which he pretended to grant in imitation of Hercules. And when the Romans reproached him with this complication of prodigality and injustice, he replied, that the grandeur of Rome appeared less in what she possessed, than what she gave away to her allies.

THE people, however, were by no means satisfied with this answer: on the contrary, they were exasperated to the highest degree, and Octavius took care to inflame their resentment by setting forth in the most conspicuous light the defects of his colleague. At length, when he found their minds sufficiently irritated against him, he resolved to send Octavia to him, as if with a view of reclaiming him from his vices, but, in reality, to furnish a pretext for declaring war against him, as he knew that Antony would dismiss her with contempt.

It happened exactly as he had foreseen. When Antony heard of his wife's arrival at Athens, whither she had come in her way to join him, he sent her peremptory orders to proceed no farther; and proceeding now from one act of folly, or rather indeed madness, to another, he resolved to divorce her, and own Cleopatra for his lawful spouse.

ACCORDINGLY he assembled the people of Alexandria in the public theatre, where an alcove of silver had been raised; and under this were placed two thrones of gold, one for himself, and the other for Cleopatra. There he seated himself, dressed like Bacchus, while Cleopatra sat beside him, clothed in the ornaments and attributes of Isis, the principal



pal deity of the Egyptians. He then declared her queen of all the countries he had bestowed upon her; while he associated Cæfario, her son by Cæsar, as her partner in the government. To the two children, which he had by her himself, he gave the title of king of kings, with very extensive dominions; and to crown his absurdities, he sent an account of his proceedings to the two consuls at Rome, who were indeed his friends, but were yet ashamed of his folly.

HAVING thus acted his part as the first of men, he resolved to act up to the dignity of the other character he assumed; that is, the character of a god: and with this view, new luxuries and pageantries were invented, and new modes of profusion devised; and the sums laid out upon these occasions were such as almost to exceed belief. Cleopatra, in particular, gave an instance of her prodigality, that perhaps never was equalled, at least never exceeded:

For this story we are indebted to Pliny the elder, who relates it at some length. Antony's table, according to him, was at all times extremely sumptuous; yet Cleopatra, who acted both as mistress and queen, put on airs of disdain, and affected to despise the entertainments of her lover. Antony, picqued at her contemptuous behaviour, asked her one day if it was possible to add to the magnificence of his table. Cleopatra replied, that nothing was more easy, and that she herself could lay out ten millions of sesterces, that is sixty-two thousand pounds sterling, upon one supper. Antony said he thought it was impossible; but she insisting upon the practicability of the thing, a wager was laid between them. On the day appointed for the decision of the question, Cleopatra gave a supper, which was no doubt magnificent; but not more so than their entertainments commonly were. Antony, therefore, began to triumph on his anticipated victory, and desired the queen to shew him the bill. She told him, that what he had yet seen was only the supper; the desert was to come, and in that lay the whole, or the great part of the expence.

UPON this she ordered an officer, who had been previously instructed, to set before her a cup of vinegar, so strong as to be able to dissolve pearls. She had at that time two of the most beautiful pearls in the world, which she wore in her ears; and taking one of them out, and throwing it into the vinegar, she dissolved it, and drank it off. She then put her hand to the other pearl, and was going to do the same with it; but Plancus, one of the company, laid hold of her arm, and stopped her, declaring that Antony had already lost the wager. They add, that after Cleopatra fell into the hands  
of



of Octavius, this pearl, which was saved by Plancus, was cut into two, and fashioned into pendants for the ears of the Venus in the Pantheon; so that that goddess was magnificently adorned with a jewel, which was only half the value of one of the suppers of Antony and Cleopatra.

OCTAVIUS had now attained to such a degree of power, that he wanted, if possible, to engross the whole, and render himself sole master of the Roman empire. The only obstacle in the way of his ambition was Antony, and he therefore determined to get rid of him. With this view he endeavoured to render him both odious and contemptible; and this, indeed, was an easy matter: for Antony's conduct was at once so vicious and so ridiculous, that it could neither secure him the esteem of any rational, nor the love of any virtuous person. He was so captivated with the charms of Cleopatra, with whom he lived in Egypt, that he became totally estranged from his wife Octavia, Augustus's sister, whom he had lately married. Nay, in a little time after, he actually divorced her, and publicly espoused Cleopatra, as his lawful wife.

Not satisfied with this, he gave her all Phœnicia, Celsyria, Cyprus, with a great part of Cilicia, Arabia, and Judæa, gifts, which he had no right to bestow, but which he pretended to grant in imitation of Hercules. He likewise associated Cæsario, her son by Cæsar, as her partner in the government; and to the two children, which he had by her himself, he gave the title of king of kings, with very extensive dominions. This complication of vice and folly totally alienated the Romans from him; and Octavius thinking he had now a sufficient pretext for declaring war against him, informed the senate of his intention to do so. However, he delayed the execution of his design for a while, being then employed in suppressing an insurrection of the Illyrians.

THE following year was chiefly taken up in preparations against Antony, who, perceiving his design, remonstrated to the senate, that he had many causes of complaint against his colleague, who had seized, he said, upon Sicily without affording him a share; had deprived Lepidus of the province he commanded, and kept it to himself; and even divided Italy among his own soldiers, without leaving any thing to recompence those in Asia. To this complaint Octavius returned a sarcastic answer. He said, it was ridiculous to complain of his distribution of a few trifling districts in Italy, when Antony, having conquered Parthia, might now reward his soldiers with whole cities and provinces. (It is to be observed, that Antony had invaded Parthia with a view of making a conquest of that country; but had been obliged to  
abandon



abandon the enterprize with the loss of one third of his men, and the whole of his baggage.) At this sarcasm he was so enraged, that he ordered his troops immediately to march into Europe, to meet Octavius, while he and Cleopatra followed to Samos, in order to prepare for carrying on the war with vigour. There, however, they trifled away their time in idle pleasures, without minding the business about which they came. The same they did afterwards at Athens, where Antony carried Cleopatra to receive new honours; and these successive delays were extremely advantageous to Augustus, who was hardly at first in a condition to meet his opponent: but at length, having collected a sufficient force for the purpose, he openly declared war against him.

THE hostile armies now began to approach each other, and may be said to have been answerable to the object that was at stake. Antony's force composed a body of an hundred thousand foot, and twelve thousand horse; while his fleet amounted to five hundred ships of war. Augustus mustered but eighty thousand foot; but equalled his adversary in the number of cavalry; his fleet, indeed, was but half as numerous as Antony's; but his ships were better built, and armed with much better soldiers.

THE great decisive engagement, which was a naval one, and was to determine the fate of Antony and Octavius, and even, in some respects, of the whole human species, was fought near Actium, a city of Epirus, at the entrance of the gulph Ambracia. Antony ranged his ships before the mouth of the gulph; and Octavius drew up his a little farther out, having the sea open behind him. Neither general took any fixed station to command in, but went about from ship to ship, wherever he found it prudent or necessary. In the mean time, the two land armies were drawn up, on opposite sides of the gulph, merely as spectators, and, by their shouts, encouraged the fleets to engage. The battle began, on both sides, with great spirit, and after a very unusual manner. The prows of their vessels were armed with brazen pikes; and with these they drove furiously against each other. In this conflict, the ships of Antony, which were large and heavy, came with greater force; but those of Octavius, which were light and easily managed, avoided the shock with greater dexterity. On Antony's side, the sterns of the ships were raised in form of a tower, from whence they threw arrows from machines made for the purpose. Those of Octavius made use of bucklers, long poles shod with iron, and fire pots. They fought in this manner for some time with equal animosity; nor was there any advantage on either side, except  
a small



a small appearance of disorder in the centre of Antony's fleet. But all of a sudden, Cleopatra determined the fortune of the day. She was seen flying from the engagement, attended by sixty sail; struck, perhaps, with the terrors natural to her sex, and influenced probably further by that treacherous spirit, for which she was remarkable. In this conduct of hers, therefore, there was nothing very surprising. But all men were amazed when they saw Antony himself following her, and leaving his fleet at the mercy of the conquerors. The engagement, nevertheless, continued with great obstinacy till five in the evening; when Antony's forces, partly overpowered by those of Octavius, and partly persuaded by the promises he made them, submitted to the conqueror. The land-forces soon after followed the example of the navy, and all yielded to Octavius without striking a blow, the fourth day after the battle.

PLUTARCH, in talking of Antony's flight, says, that, in this particular instance, he discovered neither the prudence of a general, nor the spirit of a man. He seemed even to have lost the power of following his own inclinations, and verified the remark that is commonly made of lovers, viz. that their soul dwells entirely in the person whom they love. Just as if he had been but Cleopatra's shadow, and obliged to obey all her motions, he no sooner saw her run away, than, forgetting what was due as well to himself as to those he commanded, he stepped into a five-oared galley, and went in quest of the woman, who had been the ruin at once of him and of herself. Cleopatra, seeing him approach, caused the pavilion of her ship to be pulled up, in order to prevent her being seen by him. It is probable, however, that he was as unwilling to see her, as she was to see him. She was in the stern, and he went to the prow, where he continued for the space of three days, without so much as inquiring about her. At last, upon their arrival at Ténarus, the queen's female attendants reconciled the two lovers, and every thing went on as before.

STILL Antony had the satisfaction to believe, that his army continued faithful to him, and in this belief he dispatched orders to his lieutenant, Canidius, to conduct it into Asia. But he was soon undeceived when he arrived in Africa, where he heard of its submission to his rival. At this information he was so enraged, that he was with difficulty prevented from killing himself; but at length he was prevailed on to return to Alexandria, though this indeed he did in a very different situation from that in which he left it.



THE female mind, though in general more flexible, is likewise perhaps, upon some occasions, more firm than that of males. Cleopatra seemed, in the midst of her misfortunes, to retain that fortitude, which had utterly abandoned her admirer. Having amassed considerable riches by means of confiscation, and other acts of violence, she formed a very singular and unheard of project. This was to convey her whole fleet over the isthmus of Suez into the Red Sea, and thereby save herself, with all her treasures, in another region, beyond the reach of Rome. Some of her vessels were actually transported thither, pursuant to her orders; but the Arabians having burnt them, and Antony dissuading her from the design, she abandoned it for the more impracticable one of defending Egypt against the conqueror. She did every thing in her power to execute this latter project, and made all kinds of preparations for war; at least hoping thereby to obtain better terms from Octavius.

IN fact, she had always loved Antony's fortunes rather than his person; and if she could have fallen upon any method of saving herself without him, or even at his expence, there is no doubt but she would have embraced it with joy. She even still had some hopes, from the power of her charms, though she was almost arrived at the age of forty; and fondly thought, that that beauty, and those arts of pleasing, which had captivated young Pompey, Cæsar, and Antony, might yet be sufficient to make a conquest of Octavius.

IN this, however, she was greatly disappointed. She had now to do with a man of a very different character from any of the preceding, and one whose love of power was always found superior to his appetite for pleasure. He therefore freely suffered her to practise all her arts, convinced, as he was, of his being perfectly proof against them. Nay, he formed a scheme for deceiving her in his turn; intending first, by her means, to get rid of Antony, and then to make himself master of her person, treasures, and kingdom. It is necessary to keep in view this double plot of Octavius and Cleopatra, which is the only key that can unlock the negotiations between them. Thus, in three embassies which were sent, one after another, from Antony to Octavius in Asia, the queen had always her secret agents, charged with particular proposals in her name. Antony desired no more than that his life might be spared, and to have the liberty of passing the rest of his days in a private manner at Athens, unless Octavius would allow him to remain in Egypt. Cleopatra also sent public proposals in favour of her children, on whom she demanded that the kingdom of their father should be bestowed;



flowed; but at the same time, by a private messenger, she resigned to Octavius her crown, sceptre, and all the other ensigns of royalty. With these public proposals (to neither of which, however, any answer was returned) Antony was perfectly acquainted; but to the private one he was totally a stranger. To this last Octavius replied, by assuring the queen of his favour and friendship, provided she either sent away Antony, or put him to death. Secret, however, as this negotiation was endeavoured to be kept, it could not be long concealed from Antony, who was no sooner informed of it than he fell into a passion; and, seizing upon Thyrsus, an emissary from Octavius, he caused him first to be severely scourged, and then sent back to his master. He took care, however, to send a letter by him, importing, that he had chastised Thyrsus for insulting a man in misfortunes; but withal he gave Octavius leave to avenge himself by scourging Hipparchus, Antony's freedman, in the same manner. The revenge, in this case, would have been highly pleasing to Antony, as Hipparchus had deserted him, and gone over to his rival.

MEANWHILE the operations of the war went vigorously forward, and Egypt once more became the theatre of the contending armies of Rome. Gallus, the lieutenant of Octavius, took Paretonium, which laid open the whole country to his incursions. On the other hand, Antony, who had still considerable forces both by sea and land, wanted to retake that important place. He therefore marched towards it, flattering himself, that as soon as he should shew himself to Gallus's soldiers, who had formerly served under him, their affection for their old general would revive. He approached, therefore, and exhorted them to remember their former vows of fidelity; but Gallus ordering all the trumpets to sound, effectually prevented Antony from being heard: nay he even sallied out upon him, and put his troops in disorder.

ANTONY's fleet likewise met with a great misfortune. It entered the port of Paretonium, which Gallus had left open on purpose; but having stretched out chains below the water, and raised them up immediately after the ships were got in, he contrived effectually to block up the harbour. Thus the fleet, being caught as in a net, was presently attacked on all sides, both from the sea, the shore, and the city. In this unequal conflict so many of Antony's were destroyed, that few of them, in the end, were able to escape.

ANTONY's fortunes were now become so desperate, and his folly so incorrigible, that his best friends every day began to desert him. Among others was Herod, king of the Jews, who ought to be particularly mentioned. This prince, having  
formerly



formerly received many signal favours from Antony, had hitherto attached himself to him with unshaken fidelity; but now seeing him obstinately bent on his own destruction, he did not think that either justice or gratitude required that he should perish with him. He therefore waited upon Octavius without his diadem, and in every other respect, in the character of a suppliant, but still maintaining the dignity of his rank by his noble and intrepid behaviour. According to Josephus, he addressed him in the following terms.

“CÆSAR, said he, it was Antony who made me king of the Jews, and I own that I have employed that fortune, which I owe to him, in his service. I am not afraid to own to you, that if the war against the Arabians had not prevented me, you should have seen me fighting in person against you. However, I assisted him both with troops and provisions to the utmost of my power. Since the misfortune which happened to him at Actium, I have not deserted my benefactor, and when I could be no longer an useful ally to him, I performed the office of a faithful counsellor. I represented to him, that the only way to retrieve his ruined affairs, was to put Cleopatra to death; and on that condition I offered him my riches, strong holds, troops, and persons to enable him to support the war against you. But the charms of Cleopatra have made Antony deaf to all my counsels; and god, who has been pleased to give you the victory, has hindered him from hearkening to such salutary advice. I am, therefore, vanquished with my benefactor, Antony, and my throne is overturned together with his fortune. I present myself now before you, without placing my hopes of safety in any thing but my virtue. I expect, however, that you will consider with what fidelity I have served my friend, and not what particular friend I have served.”

THIS noble and intrepid behaviour made such an impression upon the mind of Octavius, that he ordered Herod to take back his crown, confirmed him in the possession of his kingdom, and promised to continue his friendship to him.

NOR did Herod, by his subsequent conduct, appear unworthy of the favour he had received. He immediately returned into his own dominions, to make preparations for receiving Octavius, who meant to pass that way in his march towards Egypt. He furnished him with eight hundred talents, entertained him and all his attendants in the most splendid and magnificent manner; and as there was a sandy desert on the confines of Egypt, he sent thither a large quantity of water for the use of the army.

THAT



THAT supply came very opportunely; for Octavius was now advancing towards Pelusium, which, by its strong situation, might have retarded his progress for some time. But the governor of the city, either wanting courage to defend it, or previously instructed by Cleopatra to give it up, permitted him to take possession of the place; so that Octavius had now no obstacle in his way to Alexandria, whither he marched with all expedition.

ANTONY, upon his arrival, sallied out to oppose him, and putting the enemy's cavalry to flight, pursued them to their intrenchments. This slight advantage once more revived his drooping spirits, and being naturally vain, he entered Alexandria in triumph. Then going, all armed as he was, to the palace, he embraced Cleopatra, and presented her a soldier who had distinguished himself in the late engagement. The queen rewarded him very liberally; presenting him with an head-piece and breast-plate of gold. With these, however, the soldier went off the next night to the enemy's camp; prudently resolving to secure his riches by keeping on the strongest side.

ANTONY was extremely mortified at this desertion; and in order to retaliate upon his rival, he caused billets to be thrown among the soldiers of Octavius, promising the sum of fifteen hundred drachmas to every one of them that would come and enlist in his service. But Octavius was so little apprehensive of any bad effects that might arise from this manœuvre, that he assembled his army, and read one of the billets to them; the only consequence of which was, that his men were fired with a keener indignation against Antony, and conceived a stronger and more cordial attachment to their own general. Antony being now reduced to despair, had the folly (for it deserves no better name) to send a challenge to Octavius, offering to terminate their quarrel by single combat; but the other was too sensible of the great difference of their situations to accept of such a desperate offer: he only, therefore, coolly replied, that if Antony really sought for death, he certainly had many other ways of procuring it. Death, indeed, he now began to perceive, was altogether inevitable; and in order to procure it in the most honourable manner, he determined still to make one expiring effort before he gave up the contest.

For this purpose he fixed upon the first of August; and on the evening before, he ordered a grand entertainment to be made. "Give me good wine and good cheer, (cried he to his friends) let me rule to-day; to-morrow, perhaps, you may serve another master." About midnight, as Plutarch re-

lates,



lates, while a melancholy silence reigned throughout the city, a noise of voices, instruments, and dancing, was heard, as if passing through the town, and seeming to go out of the gate which looked towards the enemy.

AT day-break, Antony drew his land-forces upon a rising ground, near the city; and from thence sent orders to his gallies to engage the enemy. There he waited to be a spectator of the combat, and at first he had the pleasure to see them advance in good order; but in a little time after he was equally surprised and exasperated when he saw his ships only saluting those of Octavius, and both fleets uniting and sailing back into the harbour. At the very same instant his cavalry deserted him. He tried, however, to lead on his infantry; but these were easily vanquished, and he himself compelled to return into the town. His rage was now altogether ungovernable: he could not help crying out aloud as he passed, that he was betrayed by Cleopatra, and delivered by that ungrateful princess to those, who, for her sake alone, were his enemies. These suspicions, indeed, were but too well founded, for it was by secret orders from the queen that the fleet had passed over to the enemy.

CLEOPATRA, conscious that, by many parts of her conduct, she had incurred the resentment of Antony, and fearing that it might now break out with irresistible fury, took a very effectual method to guard herself against it. Near the temple of Isis, she erected a building, which was seemingly designed for a sepulchre. Hither she removed all her gold, silver, precious stones, and other most valuable effects, covering them over with torches and faggots. This sepulchre she designed to answer a double purpose; as well to screen her from the resentment of Antony, as to make Octavius believe that she would burn all her treasures, in case he refused her proper terms of accommodation.

HERE, therefore, she retired from Antony's present fury, shutting the gates, which were strengthened with bolts and bars of iron; but in the mean time, she caused her attendants to spread a report that she was actually dead. This news, which soon came to the ears of Antony, and was firmly believed by him, recalled all his former love and affection. Passing therefore, as was usual with him, from one extreme to another, he now lamented her death with the same violence he had but a few minutes before seemed to desire it. "Wretched man, (cried he) what is there now worth living for; since all that could sooth or soften my cares is departed! O Cleopatra, (continued he, being got to his chamber) our separation does not so much afflict me, since we shall presently  
meet



meet again, as the disgrace I suffer in permitting a woman to shew me, that I have less courage than she." He then called to one of his freedmen, named Eros, whom he had previously engaged to kill him whenever fortune should drive him to this desperate extremity. Eros being commanded to perform his promise, immediately drew his sword, and brandished it as if he meant to execute his orders; but turning about his face, he plunged it into his own bosom, "I commend thee, Eros," (cried Antony, seeing him fall at his feet) instead of doing that office, which your regard for me would not allow you to perform, you have at once the courage and the humanity to set me the example." So saying, he drew his sword, and plunging it in his belly, fell back upon a little couch.

THOUGH the wound was mortal, yet the blood stopping, he recovered his spirits, and earnestly entreated those who were come into the room to put an end to his life; but they all fled, being seized with fright and horror. While he continued crying out, and writhing his body with pain, one of the queen's secretaries, named Diomedes, came from her to propose that Antony should be conveyed to her in the tomb. By this he understood that she was still alive; and far from expressing any resentment against her for the desperate step to which she had driven him, he only desired those about him to take him in their arms, and carry him to the place where she was. They did so; but the question was how to get him admitted; for the queen would not allow the gates, by any means, to be opened, lest some of her enemies might enter at the same time. She, therefore, appeared at the window, and letting down some cords, to which they tied him, she, with the assistance of her two maids, was at last able to pull him up, though not without making the most violent efforts, and straining every nerve of her body. As soon as she had got him up, she took him in her arms, and carried him to her bed, where she gently laid him. She then gave vent to her sorrow, tearing her clothes, beating her breast, and kissing the wound of which he was dying. She called upon him as her lord, her husband, her emperor, and seemed to have forgot the greatness of her own sufferings in the affliction she felt for his. Antony entreated her to moderate the violence of her grief, and asked for some wine, either because he was thirsty, or because he thought it would hasten his end. After he had drank, he entreated Cleopatra to endeavour to preserve her life, if she could do it with honour; and mentioned Proculeius, a friend of Octavius, as one she might rely on with the greatest safety. "With regard to me, (subjoined he) do not lament my present misfortunes, but congratulate me



me on the happiness I have enjoyed. I have lived the greatest and most powerful of men, and though I fall to-day, my fate is not inglorious; a Roman myself, I am by a Roman overcome."

Just as he had done speaking he expired, and Proculeius made his appearance by command of Octavius, who had already been informed of Antony's fate. He was sent to try all means of getting Cleopatra into his power: Octavius having a double motive for wishing to accomplish this point; one to prevent her destroying the treasures she had taken with her into the tomb, and the other to preserve her person as an ornament to grace his triumph. Cleopatra, however, was upon her guard, and would not confer with Proculeius except through the gate, which was well secured. But it was not possible for them to come to an agreement. Cleopatra demanded the crown of Egypt for her children, and Proculeius advised her to throw herself entirely on the mercy of Octavius.

In the mean time having ordered Gallus, one of his fellow soldiers, to carry on the conference in his absence, he procured a ladder, and placing it against the wall, he entered, with two others, at the window, through which Antony had been conveyed. As soon as he entered, he ran down to the gate, and one of the women crying out, that they were taken alive, Cleopatra turned about, and seeing what had happened, she drew a poniard, and attempted to stab herself; but Proculeius running to her, and laying hold of her arms, prevented her committing such a desperate action. "You are unjust (said he) Cleopatra, both to yourself and to Octavius. You would deprive him of the pleasure of shewing his mercy, and make the most gentle of all conquerors pass for an inexorable tyrant." So saying, he forced the poniard out of her hand, and examined her clothes to be certain that she had no poison about her. Thus leaving every thing secure, he went to inform Octavius of what he had done. Octavius was highly pleased at finding Cleopatra in his power. He sent Epaphroditus to bring her to his palace, and to watch her with the utmost care. He was likewise ordered to use her in every respect, with that deference and submission which was due to her rank, and to do every thing in his power to render her captivity supportable.

ANTONY being dead, and Cleopatra a prisoner, Octavius made his entry into Alexandria. He took care, however, to mitigate the terror of the inhabitants by conversing familiarly, as he went along, with Areus, a philosopher, who was a native of the place. The citizens, nevertheless, trembled at his approach;



proach; and when he placed himself upon the tribunal, they prostrated themselves, with their faces to the ground, before him, like criminals who expected to hear the sentence of their execution pronounced.

OCTAVIUS immediately ordered them to rise, telling them, that three things induced him to pardon them: his respect for Alexander, who was the founder of their city; his admiration of its beauty; and his friendship for Areus, their fellow citizen. Two only of particular note were put to death upon this occasion; Antyllus, Antony's eldest son by his first wife Fulvia; and Cæsario, the son of Julius Cæsar by Cleopatra; both of them betrayed by their respective tutors, who themselves shortly after suffered for their perfidy. As for the rest of Cleopatra's children, he treated them with great gentleness, leaving them to the care of those who were entrusted with their education, who had orders to provide them with every thing suitable to their birth.

As to the queen herself, he granted her every indulgence that was consistent with the plan he had formed of keeping her in captivity, in order to lead her to Rome in triumph. He permitted her to have the honour of burying Antony; an honour so much the greater, as it was a mark of distinction which several kings and princes had earnestly solicited: but to all these it was denied in compliment to Cleopatra, who was not only allowed to perform the solemn service, but was furnished with every thing necessary to render it magnificent. Yet still it is not to be supposed, but that the many cruel mortifications she had suffered must have greatly affected her health. Add to this, that the blows she gave her breast, had produced an inflammation, which was followed by a fever, and she seemed firmly resolved to take this opportunity of starving herself to death. She accordingly abstained from all kind of food, under pretence of a regimen necessary to her disorder; hoping thus to put an end, at once, to her life and to her miseries. But Octavius, being informed of her real motive, began to threaten her with regard to her children; and Cleopatra, overcome by the tenderness natural to a mother, desisted from her fatal purpose: she suffered herself to be treated as they pleased, and in a little time recovered.

As soon as she was recovered, Octavius came to visit her person. She received him lying upon a couch in a careless manner; and upon his entering the apartment, rose up to prostrate herself before him. She had nothing on but a loose robe. Her misfortunes had given an air of severity to her features; her hair was dishevelled, her voice trembling, her complexion pale, and her eyes red with weeping. Yet still



her natural beauty seemed to gleam through the distresses that surrounded her; and the graces of her motion, and the noble sprightliness of her looks, still bore testimony to the former power of her charms. Octavius raised her with his usual complaisance, and desiring her to be seated, placed himself beside her.

CLEOPATRA had been prepared for this interview, and did every thing in her power to gain the good will of the conqueror. She tried apologies, entreaties, and allurements, to touch his heart, and soften his resentment. She began by attempting to justify her conduct, and threw the whole blame of the war upon Antony, whom, she said, she was under a necessity of obeying; but Octavius shewing her the futility of all these pretences, she at last condescended to implore his mercy. She talked of Cæsar's humanity to those in distress; she read some of his letters to her, full of tenderness, and enlarged upon the long intimacy that had subsisted between them. "But of what use (cried she) are all his benefits to me? Why could I not die with him? Yet still he lives; methinks I see him still before me; he revives in you."

OCTAVIUS was no stranger to this kind of address, and consequently was the less likely to be inveigled by it; he still continued to answer her with a cold indifference, which obliged her to give her attempts a very different turn. She now addressed his avarice, presenting him with an inventory of her treasure and jewels. This gave occasion to a very curious scene, which, as a trait of the manners of the age, it may be worth the mentioning. Seleucus, one of her stewards, having alledged, that the inventory was defective, and that she had secreted a part of her effects, she fell into a violent passion, started from her couch, and catching him by the hair, gave him several blows on the face. Octavius smiled at this folly, and desired her to desist. "What, Sir, (said she) while you do me the honour of visiting me in this melancholy situation, is it not provoking that one of my slaves should dare to insult me in your presence? And even supposing that I have secreted a few trifles, am I to blame, when they are reserved not for myself, but for Livia and Octavia, whom I hope to make my intercessors with you?"

THIS excuse, which intimated a desire of living, was not disagreeable to Octavius, who politely assured her, that she was at liberty to keep whatever she had reserved, and that in every thing else she should be indulged to the height of her expectations. He then took leave and departed; imagining he had reconciled her to life, and to the indignity of being seen in the intended triumph, which he was preparing for his return.



to Rome; but in this he was deceived. Cleopatra, all this time, had kept a correspondence with Dollabella, a young Roman of high birth in the camp of Octavius, who, either from compassion, or perhaps stronger motives, interested himself in the fate of that princess. By him she was informed of the intentions of Octavius, and that he was determined to send her off in three days, together with her children, to Rome. She now, therefore, took her final resolution, and determined to put a period to her existence; but previously entreated leave to offer her last libations at the tomb of Antony. This request being granted, she was carried, with her two female attendants, to the stately monument where he was laid. There throwing herself upon the coffin, “O, my dear Antony, (said she) a few days ago I should have buried you with hands that were still free; but now I offer you libations, a captive, a prisoner, and carefully watched, lest by the violence of my grief I should disfigure this wretched body, this body that is enslaved, and which they carefully guard for the fatal pomp of a triumph over you. Expect no more offerings or oblations from me; these are the last you will receive from Cleopatra, who is now going to be forced away from you. Nothing could separate us while both alive; but we are in danger of being strangely removed from each other by death; since you, who are a Roman, have found your tomb here, and I, an Egyptian, must go in quest of mine to Italy, the only good your country has ever procured me. But if the gods of the place, which you now inhabit have any power, (for those here have betrayed us) do not abandon your spouse while she continues to live, nor suffer them to triumph over you in my person. Conceal me here with you; shut me up in your sepulchre; for amidst all the misfortunes I endure, none has been so painful and afflicting to me as the short space of time I have lived without you.”

AFTER these moving complaints, she crowned the coffin with flowers, and having kissed it a thousand times, she returned home, to execute her fatal resolution. She then bathed, and ordered a sumptuous entertainment; and while it was getting ready, a peasant brought her a covered basket. The guards having asked him what it was, he opened it, and taking out the leaves on the top, shewed them some figs. They admired the beauty and largeness of them, and the peasant, with natural air, desired them to take some of them. As they did not suspect that he carried any thing else, they suffered him to pass.

As soon as Cleopatra had finished her dinner, she gave Epaphroditus a sealed letter to deliver to Octavius, and having



caused every body to retire except her two women, she ordered them to shut the doors of her apartment. Octavius, upon opening the letter, found nothing in it but the most lamentable entreatie, Cleopatra desiring, as the greatest favour, to be buried beside Antony. He easily guessed the meaning of this request, and had thoughts, at first, of going to her himself; but he judged it more proper to send some of his attendants to see what had passed. This was accordingly done: they ran as fast as possible, and found the guards quiet at their posts, not in the least suspecting that any thing uncommon had happened: but upon entering the chamber, they saw Cleopatra lying dead upon a gilded couch, arrayed in her royal robes. Of the two women who attended her, one, named Iris, lay dead at her mistress's feet, and the other, whose name was Charmion, already staggering, and hardly able to support herself, was putting the diadem on Cleopatra's head. "Alas, (cried one of the persons, who had been sent by Octavius) was this well done, Charmion?" "Yes, (replied she) it is very well done; such a death becomes a queen descended from a race of glorious ancestors." On pronouncing these words, she fell down and expired.

As the death of Cleopatra had been so very sudden, Octavius imagined that there might still remain in her some principle of life, which might possibly be revived. He therefore tried counter-poisons, and every other method he could think of, for re-animating the vital spark, if any yet existed; but all his attempts for this purpose proved finally ineffectual, and he was therefore obliged to see his triumph deprived of so great an ornament.

It is plain, from the whole of this account, that no body could certainly know what were the means Cleopatra used to put an end to her life. Some thought, that under the figs which were brought to her by the peasant, there was concealed an asp, which she caused to sting her arm. They fancied they observed upon her arm, after her death, two very small, and almost imperceptible punctures, like the bite of a serpent; but as to the animal itself, they saw nothing of it; only they imagined they could trace the marks of its body on the sand opposite the windows of Cleopatra's apartment. All this, however, is very uncertain; but Octavius seems to have been firmly of this opinion, as appears from the nature of his triumph, in which he carried a picture, representing Cleopatra with an asp sticking to her arm. Horace mentions the circumstance as an undoubted fact; Virgil too has an allusion to it; and most other writers have been of the same way of thinking.

CLEOPATRA



CLEOPATRA died at the age of thirty-nine, after having reigned twenty-two years, during the greatest part of which she partook in Antony's good fortune, and saw all the kings and princes of the East submit to her power. In her ended the reign of the Lagides in Egypt, which, counting backward from her death, had lasted two hundred and ninety-four years. She was buried near Antony, according to her desire, and Octavius even finished the tomb which they had begun to build themselves. He likewise ordered a decent funeral for the two women who had accompanied her to her death.

ANTONY, when he died, was, according to some, fifty-three years of age, and according to others fifty-six. He made a more shining figure than could well be expected from a man whose vices greatly surpassed his abilities. He is said to have been naturally humane and generous; but the violence of his passions was such, that it sometimes hurried him into as great acts of cruelty as ever were committed by the most merciless tyrants.

The statues, that had been erected to him, in different parts of the empire, were all thrown down after his death, by virtue of a decree of the senate, which passed when Cicero's son presided, who was then consul. This was remarked as a very singular circumstance, and was considered by all the world as a kind of consolation to the manes of Cicero, whose son gave the last blow of infamy and disgrace to his enemy and murderer. For the same senatus-consultum ordained, that whatever had been decreed in favour of Antony should be abolished, that his birth-day should be numbered among those called unfortunate, and that none of the family of Antony should ever after bear the name of Marcus. The statues of Cleopatra would have shared the same fate as those of Antony, had not her generous friend, Archibius, taken care to preserve them by paying a ransom for them to Octavius, to the amount of 225,000 pounds.

By the final victory over Antony and Cleopatra, Egypt became a conquered country, and in a little time a Roman province. Octavius making use of the right of a conqueror, carried out of it with him an immense quantity of plunder. The palace of its kings had been long filled with prodigious treasures, and these Cleopatra had augmented by the most cruel extortions, and especially by plundering the temples of every thing valuable they contained. The reproach of all these sacrileges fell upon her; but Octavius reaped the fruit of them. He likewise made the Alexandrians, and all the Egyptians purchase the pardons he granted. In a word, the money he took out of Egypt amounted to such a sum as enabled



him to pay all he owed to his soldiers, and besides to give those who followed him in this last expedition a gratuity of about six pounds sterling a man. This he did to indemnify them for the loss of the plunder of Alexandria, of which he had been obliged to deprive them. He repaid all he had borrowed for supporting the war, and magnificently rewarded the Roman senators and knights who had served him. In short, Rome was enriched, and its temples adorned with the spoils of Egypt. Nothing can better discover the immense quantity of money that was brought into Rome upon this occasion, than the change it made in the rate of interest, which was reduced from twelve to four per cent. This, indeed, might be partly owing to the general tranquillity that thenceforward ensued, and the first fruits of which the people had already begun to taste.

A PROVINCE so rich, and so very fertile in corn, was a considerable acquisition to the Roman empire. From this time forward, Alexandria became the nurse of Rome, supplying that capital of the universe with provisions for four months in the year. But, as there is no good without some evil, even this richness of the country, and this fertility of the soil, might be attended with danger. It might inspire an ambitious governor with the thoughts of throwing off his dependence upon Rome, and crecting himself into an independent sovereign. Alexander had formerly been so apprehensive of the danger arising from this quarter, that in settling the government of the country, he had divided the authority among several persons. Octavius took another method to prevent the like evil, but one at the same time that answered the purpose full as well. He committed the care of the province, not to an honourable magistrate, but to a simple Roman knight, with the title of prefect; and this man had under him only three legions, with some smaller bodies of troops distributed in different parts of the country. The first whom he invested with this office was Gallus, a person of low condition, and one who was indebted to him for all he possessed. Octavius carried his precautions still farther; he would not allow any Roman senator to set foot in Egypt without having previously obtained leave.

In order to put a check upon the restless and turbulent disposition of the people, he would not suffer them to have either a senate or public council in Alexandria, though almost all the other towns of the empire enjoyed this privilege: and in general he did not establish in Egypt that kind of government which the Romans introduced into their other new conquests, and which had always something of a republican spirit in it. Egypt, on the contrary, was governed in another manner:



it was ruled in a style almost entirely monarchical, its ancient kings being now represented by the Roman prefects.

BUT while Octavius was taking these seemingly severe, though perhaps indispensably necessary measures for establishing himself in the possession of his new conquest, he was extremely attentive to the happiness of the people that had become subject to his command. He wanted that Egypt, in return for the benefits she procured the Roman empire, should receive, if possible, from her new masters, whatever she stood in need of to make her people happy. The last kings of Egypt had been little better than a set of monsters, distinguished for nothing but their cruelty, their rapacity, and their contempt of all laws human and divine. Under their government the people, in spite of the natural fertility and other advantages of their country, had been extremely unhappy. Under Octavius, however, things assumed, in a little time, a very different and a more pleasing aspect. Those canals, which come from the Nile, and were equally necessary for fertilizing the soil, and carrying on the internal commerce of the country, had, through the negligence of the preceding kings, been entirely spoiled, and stopped up with mud. Octavius caused his troops to cleanse the old canals, and to cut out new ones. But his chief attention was directed to the maritime commerce, for which Alexandria had been originally built, of which, by its situation, it seemed destined to be the center, and of which it certainly would have been so, had not the folly of its rulers prevented it. But the city being now put under a different kind of government, soon attained to that eminence to which it was entitled. It soon became the general magazine of all nations, and the chief link of that chain which connected the East with the West. In a word, it was raised to the rank of the second city in the world, and this distinction it continued to enjoy till its splendor was eclipsed by the building of Constantinople.

WHILE Octavius was at Alexandria, he visited the tomb of its founder, Alexander the Great. He even touched the body; and Dio has thought proper to observe, that the tip of the nose, on which he laid his hand, mouldered immediately into dust. The marks of veneration he shewed to the ashes of that great conqueror, the flowers which he strewed upon his tomb, and the crown with which he adorned him, are circumstances more worthy of notice. They wanted likewise to shew him the tombs of the Ptolemies; but he refused it, saying, that he was curious to see a king, and not dead bodies. He likewise excused himself from visiting Apis by an expression



still more sensible and judicious: "I am accustomed," said he, "to honour the gods, and not an ox."

UPON his return to Rome Octavius had three triumphs decreed him; one for his defeat of the Dalmatians and Pannonians, another for his victory at Actium, and a third for the conquest of Egypt. These triumphs, though no doubt celebrated with all that pomp and magnificence which became the majesty of the Roman empire, and the character of the person they were intended to honour, are not worth a particular description. But one of them was attended with so very tender and affecting a circumstance, as ought not to pass unnoticed. It related to the two eldest sons of Adjatorix. This man, who was descended from the tetrarch of Gallo-Græcia, had been appointed by Antony prince of the city of Heracleum and of Pontus. Part of that town was then inhabited by a Roman colony, and Adjatorix, taking advantage of the troubles that distracted Rome, attacked, in the night time, those who composed the colony, and under pretence of an order from Antony, put them all to the sword. This was a crime so very atrocious, that Octavius thought it deserving the severest punishment. He accordingly led Adjatorix with his wife and children in triumph, and then condemned the prince himself, with his eldest son, to die. Adjatorix had three sons, all of whom attended him on the day and at the place of execution; and when the fatal moment arrived for putting the sentence in force, the second, with a generosity almost unexampled, stepped forward, and said, that he was the eldest, and ought therefore to suffer the penalty of the law. But the eldest, whose name was Dyteutes, would not suffer himself to be outdone in generosity by his brother, and he therefore insisted upon the privilege of his birth, which, however, was no other than instant and a bloody death. The dispute between them continued for a long time, and was an exact representation of that between Pylades and Orestes. But at last their relations representing to Dyteutes, that as he was the eldest, he was of course the most capable of maintaining his mother and his youngest brother, he allowed his sense of justice, and his fraternal affection to be thus overcome, and the second brother of consequence suffered in his stead.

THE celebration of these triumphs was followed by a ceremony, which, to a man of a humane and benevolent disposition, must certainly have been more agreeable than any other honour that could possibly have been done him. This was no other than shutting the temple of Janus, which was never done but in a time of profound peace. Every body knows, that, since the foundation of Rome, the temple of Janus had

never



never been shut but twice; first in the reign of Numa, and afterwards at the conclusion of the first Punic war. It was shut again for the third time, and by this it was declared, that *the gates of war*, as Virgil calls them, were effectually barred, and that all mankind was restored to the enjoyment of perfect peace and tranquillity.

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## C H A P. XXIV.

*From the Establishment of AUGUSTUS \* in the Imperial Power to his Death.*

[ANN. ROM. 723. BEFORE CHRIST 29.]

THE chief object that engaged the attention of Octavius after his return to Rome, was to determine with himself what kind of government he should establish; whether he should replace every thing upon its former footing, and restore the republic; or whether he should retain the sovereign power in his own hands, and thus make himself master of the lives and liberties of his fellow citizens. The better to enable him to settle this important point, he took the advice of his two principal favourites and ministers, Agrippa and Mæcenas. Agrippa, like an honest, open-hearted soldier, boldly advised him to embrace the first of these measures; while Mæcenas, like an artful, insinuating courtier, strongly recommended the second; and this, which was most agreeable to the sentiments of Octavius, was accordingly adopted.

In order, however, to blind the eyes of the people, and make them imagine they still possessed the substance, though they had only the shadow of liberty, he still allowed them to retain all their old names of magistracy. They had still their

\* We begin our list of emperors with Augustus, because Julius Cæsar, though frequently called THE FIRST ROMAN EMPEROR, was never formally acknowledged as such, nor ever established on the imperial throne.



consuls, their tribunes, their prætors, ediles, and censors, who were very readily suffered to enjoy the names, while the whole power was veiled in the hands of Augustus; for that was the appellation the senate, among their other marks of flattery, now gave him. No person could be chosen into any of these offices without his express permission; nor, after he was chosen, dared he to exercise any part of his function, that was in the least disagreeable to the emperor; the name, which Augustus thought proper to assume, instead of that of king, as being less odious to the people; since king among the Romans was considered as signifying the same as tyrant, whereas emperor imported no more than the commander of an army: and this last character Augustus took care to reserve entirely to himself. He bestowed upon the senate the government of some of the interior provinces, which could easily be managed without any soldiers, but he kept in his own hands the government of the remote and frontier provinces, which required an army to regulate and defend them; and thus he contrived to be always at the head of the whole military force of the state.

To carry his hypocrisy still farther, and to prevent the people effectually from seeing into his designs, he actually offered to resign the supreme power. But he had taken care previously to secure in his interest a majority of the senate, who rejected his proposal, and advised him to retain the power he had assumed, which, they said, no other man was equally well qualified to exercise, and which the interest of the public required to be exercised by a single person.

In this last assertion, indeed, there seemed to be too much truth. For the empire was now become so large, and the people so degenerate, that a republican government appeared to be no longer practicable; and since an absolute monarchy was become necessary, perhaps it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to find a better absolute monarch than Augustus. For though he had waded, through oceans of blood, to the attainment of the supreme power, yet no sooner had he completely attained it, than he seemed all at once to change his nature, and from a cruel, suspicious, and hard-hearted tyrant, he became instantly one of the most gentle and humane absolute princes that perhaps ever existed.

He even put on, upon some occasions, an appearance of modesty, which it would have been dangerous for a sovereign, possessed of less power, to assume. He suffered his courtiers, and even his meaner subjects, to upbraid him publicly, and remind him of his duty. Although he was, by the authority of his station, capable of condemning or acquitting whomsoever he pleased, he yet thought proper to let the laws take  
their



their proper course, and even sometimes pleaded for those he desired to protect. Of this the following is a remarkable instance. Primus, governor of Macedonia, had, by his own proper authority, made war upon the Odrisi, a neighbouring people. For this breach of duty he was called to account, and alledged, in his defence, that he had acted by the command of Augustus. Augustus denied the charge, and even appeared in court to make good his assertion. Upon which the advocate for Primus asked, with an insolent air, what had brought Augustus thither, or who had sent for him. To this the emperor submissively replied, "The Commonwealth;" an answer which greatly pleased the people.

UPON another occasion, one of his veteran soldiers entreated his protection in a certain cause; but Augustus, taking little notice of his request, desired him to apply to an advocate. "Ah! (said the soldier) it was not by proxy that I fought for you at the battle of Actium." This reply pleased Augustus so much, that he pleaded his cause in person, and gained it for him. He was accessible to persons even of the very lowest rank, and wished they should approach him without fear. One day a person presented him a petition with so much awe, that he was displeased at it. "What, friend, (cried he) you seem as if you were offering something to an elephant, and not to a man; be bolder."

ONE day, as he was sitting in judgment, Mæcenas perceiving by his look that he was inclined to be severe, attempted to speak to him; but not being able to come near him for the crowd, he threw a paper to him, containing these words, "Arise, executioner;" on which Augustus immediately arose, and acquitted the persons he seemed disposed to condemn.

BUT what was the most striking proof of a total alteration in his temper, was his behaviour to Cornelius Cinna, Pompey's grandson. This nobleman had formed a conspiracy against him; but the plot was discovered before it was ripe for execution. Augustus, for a long time, deliberated with himself what course he should pursue, whether he should banish or pardon the conspirators; but at last his humanity got the better of his resentment; he, therefore, sent for those who were guilty, and, after reprimanding them, dismissed them. But he was resolved to mortify Cinna by the greatness of his generosity; for addressing him in particular, "I have twice (says he) given you your life; first, as an enemy; now, as a conspirator: I now give you the consulship; let us, therefore, be friends for the future, and let us only contend in shewing to the world, which should be deemed most worthy of praise, your gratitude or my generosity."



Nor was Augustus more remarkable for his modesty and humanity, than he was for his sagacity and political prudence. He took care, soon after his elevation to power, to enact a number of laws that were attended with the best and most salutary effects. He ordained, that none should exhibit a show of gladiators without orders from the senate, and then no oftener than twice a year, nor with more than an hundred and twenty at a time. This law was extremely necessary at so corrupt a period of the empire, when whole armies of these unfortunate men were brought at once upon the stage, and frequently compelled to fight till one half of them were slain.

It had been usual also with the knights, and some women of the first distinction, to exhibit themselves as dancers upon the theatre: he ordered, that not only they, but their children and grandchildren, should be restrained from such exercises for the future. He fined many, who had refused to marry at a certain age, and rewarded such as had many children. He ordained that virgins should not be married till twelve years of age; and permitted any person to kill an adulterer taken in the fact. He enacted, that the senators should be always held in great reverence, adding to their character what he had taken from their power.

He made a law, that no man should have the freedom of the city without a previous inquiry into his merit and character. He appointed new rules and limits to the manumission of slaves, and was himself very strict in the observance of them. With regard to players, of whom he was very fond, he severely examined their morals, not allowing the least licentiousness in their lives, nor indecency in their actions. Though he encouraged the athletic exercises, yet he would not permit women to be present at them; holding it unbecoming the modesty of the sex to be spectators of these sports, which were performed by naked men.

In order to prevent bribery in suing for offices, he took considerable sums of money from the candidates, by way of pledge; and if any indirect practices were proved against them, they were obliged to forfeit all. Slaves had been hitherto prohibited from bearing witness against their masters; but he took off the restraint, and first sold the slave to another, which, by altering the property, rendered the evidence legal. These, and many other salutary laws, were enacted by Augustus, and the observance of them enforced with the greatest care and attention. He likewise took care to reform the senate, by expelling from it, or, what pleased him better, by persuading voluntarily to retire from it, all such as were deemed unfit to be members of that august body. By this

means



means he reduced the number of senators from a thousand, to which, during the civil wars, it had swelled, to six hundred, the number of which, during the most virtuous times of the republic, it had generally consisted. This was the most unpopular, and perhaps the most dangerous measure he attempted during his whole reign; and yet such was his prudence or good fortune, that he was able to get through with it, not only without exciting any disturbance, but even without meeting with much opposition.

HAPPY, however, as he was in his public capacity, he was far from being equally so in his private and domestic concerns. His daughter, Julia, whom he had by his first wife Scribonia, and whom he married, first to his general Agrippa, and afterwards to his step-son and successor, Tiberius, turned out to be a most profligate and abandoned woman, prostituting herself, in the most shameless manner, to a variety of persons, and even making her father's palace the scene of her debaucheries. At this the emperor was so highly enraged, that he threatened, at first, to put her to death; but, after some consideration, he contented himself with banishing her to the island of Pandataria, where he kept her ever after closely confined. Notwithstanding her vicious life, she had two sons by Agrippa, named Caius and Lucius; but they both died when very young.

THE emperor's severity towards his daughter on account of her gallantries is the more remarkable, though perhaps not the less justifiable, that he himself was supposed to be not very delicate in matters of this kind. He is said to have debauched the wife of his prime minister and favourite Mæcenus; and every body knows, that his second and best-beloved wife, Livia, was, at the time he married her, the spouse of another man, Tiberius Nero, who, it is true, gave her up voluntarily to the emperor, even after she was six months gone with child, and that child, when born, who was named Drusus, was generally supposed to be his own son.

HAVING now attained to a good old age, and having no direct descendant of his own body, he began seriously to think of a successor, and by the advice of Livia, he cast his eyes upon Tiberius, her oldest son by her first husband. Having thus fixed his choice, he desired the senate no longer to salute him at the palace according to custom, nor to take it amiss, if, for the future, he could not converse with them as formerly. From that time Tiberius was joined with him in the government of the provinces, and invested with almost the same degree of power. Augustus, however, could not entirely forsake the administration of the state, which habit had,



in some measure, rendered necessary to his happiness ; he still continued a watchful guardian of its interests, and shewed himself, to the last, a lover of his people.

FINDING it now, therefore, very inconvenient for him to come to the senate, on account of his age, he desired to have twenty privy-counsellors assigned him for a year ; and it was decreed, that whatever measures they and the consuls should resolve upon, should have the full force of a law. He seemed to be apprehensive of his approaching end ; for he made his will, and delivered it to the vestal virgins. He then solemnized the census, or numbering of the people, whom he found to be four millions one hundred and thirty-seven thousand ; which shews Rome to be equal to four of the greatest cities of modern times.

Soon after this, having accompanied Tiberius, in his march into Illyria, as far as Beneventum, he was then seized with a weakness of the bowels and stomach. Returning, therefore, from thence, he came to Nola, near Capua, and there finding himself dangerously ill, he sent for Tiberius, with the rest of his most intimate friends and acquaintance. He did not continue long to indulge vain hopes of recovery, but convinced that his end was at hand, patiently waited its arrival. A few hours before his death, he ordered a looking-glass to be brought, his hair to be dressed with more than usual care, and something to be done to conceal the extreme hollowness of his cheeks. He then spoke to his friends, whom he saw surrounding his bed, and asked them, whether they thought he had properly played his part in life ; to which being answered in the affirmative, he cried out with his last breath, “ Then give me your applause ; ” and thus, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, after reigning forty-one, he expired in the arm of Livia, bidding her remember their marriage and farewell.

THE character of Augustus may be easily deduced from this account of his life and reign, short and uncircumstantial as it certainly is. Prudence, bordering upon cunning, seems to have been his chief characteristic. By this he contrived to keep the people in a constant belief, that he wanted to resign the supreme power, though nothing, in reality, was farther from his wishes. He had the art, however, every tenth year of his reign, to make a show of offering such a resignation ; but he always took care to have a sufficient number of friends in the senate to gratify his real views, and oppose his pretended inclinations.

It must be owned, indeed, for his honour, that if an absolute government was become necessary to the Romans, no man seemed to be better qualified for conducting it than Augustus.



Augustus. He was certainly one of the best sovereigns that ever existed; but the bulk of his successors were such a set of monsters as disgraced not only the royal character, but even the character of humanity itself. Hence it was frequently said of him, "That it had been happy for mankind if he had never been born, or had never died."

As the reign of Augustus was upon the whole a peaceable one, it was not distinguished by many of those military events, that constitute the most shining part of the history of most other monarchs. Not but that there were some petty wars in the remote provinces of the empire; but they were in general of too unimportant a nature to deserve being here particularly mentioned. The most remarkable one was that carried on by Quintilius Varus. This general, invading the territories of the Germans, was induced to follow the enemy among their forests and marshes, with his army in separate bodies; there he was surrounded by night, and entirely cut off with his whole army. These were the best and choicest legions of the whole empire, either for valour, discipline, or experience. This defeat made a deep impression upon the mind of every Roman, and particularly upon that of Augustus. He was often heard to cry out, in a tone of anguish, "Quintilius Varus, restore me my legions;" and some historians pretend to say, that he never after recovered the former serenity of his temper.

THOUGH Julius Cæsar is commonly called the first Roman emperor, yet the imperial power cannot be said to have been established, till the time of Augustus, nor was it even firmly fixed till towards the middle of his reign. That the Romans were remarkable for simplicity of dress in the time of Augustus is sufficiently evident from this circumstance; that he himself wore no clothes but what were spun by his wife, his sister, his daughter, or grand-daughters.

A TASTE, however, for simplicity of dress may be very consistent with barbarity of manners; and that the manners of the Romans were then very barbarous, will be denied by no one who considers, that as they were all of them possessed of a power of life and death over their slaves, they sometimes exercised that power with the most wanton cruelty. Of this the following is a remarkable instance. One Veditius Pollio, who had himself been a slave, being admitted to his freedom, and afterwards created a Roman knight, kept a large pond for his lampreys, which he was so savage as to feed with human flesh; and the usual punishment inflicted on his slaves, even sometimes for the most trivial faults, was to be bound hand  
and



and foot, and thrown into the pond to feed those voracious animals.

THIS wretch, however, who ought to have been shunned and detested by every humane person, was numbered among the friends of Augustus, who certainly could derive no great honour from such a connection. One day that the emperor dined with him, a slave happening to break a crystal vase, was immediately condemned to be thrown to the lampreys. The poor fellow, struck with terror at such a dreadful sentence, fell at the feet of Augustus, and humbly implored, if not his life, at least a less cruel and shocking death. The emperor, accordingly, solicited his pardon, and meeting with a refusal from Vedius, he ordered all the vases that were upon the beaufet to be set before him, and he broke every one of them with his own hand. So seasonable a lesson had the desired effect: it humbled the pride, and perhaps reformed the temper of Vedius, and it certainly saved the life of the unhappy slave.

EVERY body knows, that the age of Augustus, or the Augustan age, as it is commonly called, is only another name for an age of science and polite literature. It is a mistake, however, to imagine, that this was owing either to the example or encouragement of the emperor. A taste for letters had been introduced into Rome long before the time of Augustus, and in many instances had been carried to the highest perfection. Lucretius, Terence, Cicero, Sallust, and Cæsar flourished before him, and had all, in their different walks, set such example of excellence, as was rarely afterwards equalled, and certainly never exceeded. True it is, that the two greatest Roman poets, Horace and Virgil, lived in the reign of Augustus, and were, both of them, honoured with his friendship, and loaded with his favours; and but for him, it is probable, they would never have attained to that high reputation they afterwards did. Certain it is that he granted them a pardon, which they both stood in need of, as, during the civil wars, they had been engaged in the opposite party; and, by rendering their circumstances easy, he put it in their power to prosecute their studies, and to compose those admirable works that have transmitted their names with so much honour to posterity. Ovid and Livy also were two great ornaments of the Augustan age: the latter, in particular, was said to be as great in genius as the Romans were in arms.

THE most remarkable event of this reign, indeed the most remarkable that ever distinguished any period, was the birth of our Saviour, who came into the world to teach new laws, and enforce the practice of every moral virtue. He was born in  
Judea,



Judea, in the seven hundred and fifty-second year of Rome, the twenty-fifth of the reign of Augustus, and in the four thousand and third year of the world, according to the common computation.

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## C H A P. XXV.

### TIBERIUS, *the Second Roman Emperor.*

[ANN. ROM. 762. A. D. 14.]

ALTHOUGH Augustus had appointed Tiberius successor, it was not because he thought him the most proper person, but because all his own posterity being extinct, except Agrippa Posthumus, the son of the general of that name by his daughter Julia, and he being of a most profligate character, he had hardly any other choice left. Besides, he was prevailed upon to do so by the constant importunities of his wife Livia, whose eldest son Tiberius was by her first husband Nero. Tiberius, indeed, who was in the fifty-sixth year of his age at the time of his accession, was a man of parts, and an excellent general; but then he was of a dark, gloomy, and cruel disposition, committing the most unheard-of barbarities with the greatest coolness and deliberation. This turn of mind, however, he had taken care to conceal, during the lifetime of Augustus; but being now freed from the restraint put upon him by the presence of that prince, and finding himself possessed of absolute and uncontrouled power, he gave full scope to the natural depravity of his temper. The first person that fell a victim to his jealousy was Agrippa Posthumus, whom we have just now mentioned. This youth had imitated the licentiousness of his mother, rather than the prudence of his father, and had therefore been banished by Augustus into the island of Planasium. He was now put to death by Tiberius, who alledged, in his defence, that he received orders for doing so from Augustus, who was anxious for the safety of the succession. He carried his dissimulation still farther. When the centurion, who had executed his commands, came with the account, Tiberius pretended that he had given no such command, and that he should answer for his conduct before the senate. The affair, however, was soon hushed up, and no enquiry made after the murderer.



THE beginning, however, of Tiberius's reign, except in this single instance, was marked with such traits of prudence, generosity, and even mercy, as gave the people reason to hope he would prove a very different monarch from what he afterwards became. He rejected the titles of lord and master, by which the senate proposed to address him in quality of emperor: "I am master," said he, "of my slaves; I am general of my soldiers; and chief of the people." He prohibited their erecting statues to him but upon certain occasions, and absolutely forbade their worshipping him as a deity; an impious honour, that had been offered both to Cæsar and Augustus. Even those praises, which he might justly have received, seemed irksome to him; and he appeared to desire no other reward for his public labours, but the consciousness of having deserved them.

WHEN the senate offered to take an oath to obey all the laws he had hitherto made, or should make for the future, he reprimanded their servility, observing, that all sublunary things were subject to change, and that the higher he was raised, he should only be exposed to the greater danger. From an affectation of modesty, but really from a fear of seeing his own grandeur eclipsed, he opposed the excessive honours that were intended to be bestowed upon his mother Livia, to whose credit, however, during the late reign, he had been chiefly indebted for his first rise.

He assumed also the appearance of great patience and moderation upon all occasions; and though, in the senate, some things passed contrary to his will, yet he seemed not in the least offended. Having heard that some persons had spoken ill both of him and his government, he shewed no resentment, but mildly replied, that in a free city, the tongues of men ought also to be free. When some governors had shewn him a method of increasing his revenues, he with indignation answered, that a good shepherd ought to shear his sheep, but never to slay them. He made many sumptuary laws against taverns, and places of public resort: he punished wives who had violated their matrimonial vows, and even prohibited kissing by way of salutation. He carefully suppressed robberies and seditions, and caused justice to be duly and regularly administered in all the towns of Italy. He behaved in the most respectful manner to the senate, and in the beginning did nothing without their advice and approbation. They, on their part, were continually loading him with the most extravagant praises; so that no prince was ever more flattered than he. Nor is it an improbable conjecture to suppose,



suppose, that such adulation induced him more boldly to throw aside the mask of dissimulation.

His behaviour to Germanicus was the first thing that unveiled his real character, and set it in its true and genuine light. In a little time after his accession to the throne he received intelligence, that the legions in Pannonia, hearing of the death of Augustus, and desirous of novelty, had revolted; but these were soon reduced to obedience, and their leader, Paracennius, slain.

A COMMOTION in Germany was attended with more important consequences. The legions in that part of the empire were conducted by Germanicus, the son of Drusus, late brother of Tiberius, a youth of most admirable qualities, and who had been, at the late emperor's request, adopted, in order to succeed to the empire. The legions, under his command, had taken the opportunity of his absence to revolt, and now boldly began to affirm, that the whole Roman empire was at their disposal, and that its principal grandeur was owing to the success of their arms. They therefore resolved, upon the return of Germanicus, to elect him emperor, and as he was the darling of the soldiers, he might easily, had he thought proper, have made their election valid; but his sense of duty prevailing over his love of power, he rejected their offer with the utmost indignation, and did every thing he could to oppose the sedition. This at last he effected, though not without extreme danger to his own person, by cutting off many of the principal revolters, and then leading the troops against the Germans, who were considered as the common enemies of the empire.

TIBERIUS was as much pleased with the loyalty of Germanicus, as he was vexed at his popularity; his success also, immediately after, against the Germans, exposed him still farther to the emperor's envy. He defeated the enemy in several engagements, and subdued many populous and warlike nations; but none of his victories was more honourable than that which recovered the standards that had been taken from the unfortunate Varus, and erected trophies to his own troops upon that very spot, on which the legions of the former had been slain. Upon one of these monuments he placed a modest inscription, mentioning only the people that were conquered and the army that conquered them; but omitting entirely his own name, either willing to avoid envy, or thinking that posterity would supply the defect.

ALL these victories, however, at the same time that they increased the fame, tended rather to endanger the person of the general, by inflaming still farther the jealousy of the emperor,



emperor. This very soon began to appear by Tiberius's making use of every pretence to draw Germanicus from the legions in Germany; and an invasion of the Parthians, which happened about this time, furnished him with a very fair and a plausible opportunity. That fierce and unconquerable people having slain two of their kings, and refused to accept another, who had been an hostage at Rome, and was supposed to be lawful heir, broke the peace which had been made in the reign of Augustus, and invaded Armenia, a kingdom tributary to the Romans.

TIBERIUS, instead of being sorry, seemed rather to be pleased at this invasion, as it gave him a pretence for recalling Germanicus, and thereby removing him from the command of those legions, which were too strongly attached to his interest. He began by procuring him a triumph for his victory in Germany, and then writing to him to return, in order to enjoy the honours the senate had decreed him; adding, that he had reaped glory enough in a country where he had been sent nine times, and had every time been victorious; concluding that he had thereby more than merited a triumph, and that the most signal punishment that could be inflicted on the Germans was to allow them to destroy each other by their intestine divisions. Germanicus accordingly returned to Rome, where, after enjoying a splendid triumph, which he richly deserved, he set out for Asia; and, by his admirable conduct, he soon suppressed all the disturbances that had broke out in that country. But here he met with a new enemy, whom he little expected.

TIBERIUS was not satisfied with banishing him from Rome, (for the expedition to Asia was little better than a real banishment) unless he also took secret measures for effecting his destruction. With this view he had appointed Cneius Piso to be governor of Syria. This was a man of a furious and headstrong temper, and, in every respect, qualified to execute the fatal purposes for which he was designed. His instructions were to oppose Germanicus upon every occasion; to render him as odious as possible; and even to procure his death, if an opportunity should offer. Germanicus, who, though a brave soldier, was naturally of a mild and gentle disposition, chose rather to elude the malice of his enemies than openly to oppose it. He therefore took a journey into Egypt under pretence of viewing the curiosities of that country, but in reality to avoid the machinations of Piso, and those of his wife Plancina. Upon his return, however, to Antioch, he was seized with a dangerous, and, as it soon appeared to be, a mortal distemper; and, from a strong suspi-



cion that he had been poisoned, he addressed his friends, who stood around his bed, in these terms: "Had my death been natural, I might have reason to complain of being thus snatched away from my parents, my wife, my children, and my country, at so early an age; but now my complaints are aggravated in falling the victim of Piso and Plancina's treachery. Let the emperor, I conjure you, know the manner of my death, and the tortures I suffer. Those who loved me, when living, those even who envied my fortune, will feel some regret, when they hear of a soldier, who had so often escaped the rage of the enemy, falling a sacrifice to the treachery of a woman. Plead then my cause before the people; you will be heard with pity; and if my murderers should pretend to have acted by command, they will either receive no credit or no pardon." So saying, he stretched forth his hand, which his weeping friends tenderly pressing, most solemnly swore, that they would lose their lives, rather than their revenge. The dying prince then turning to his wife, conjured her by the regard she had for his memory, and by all the ties of nuptial love, to submit to the necessity of the times, and to disarm, if possible, the resentment of her more powerful enemies, by not seeming to oppose it. Thus much he said openly: something more was uttered in private; intimating, as was supposed, his fears from the emperor's cruelty; and shortly after he expired.

Nothing could exceed the grief of the whole empire upon hearing of the death of Germanicus. The people of Antioch broke out into the most frantic expressions of sorrow. They flung stones at the temples of their gods, and overturned their altars; some threw their domestic deities into the streets, and others exposed the children that were born upon so black and inauspicious a day. At Rome the people kept their grief within somewhat more decent bounds; but it was not, on that account, the less sincere or the less general. A vacation immediately took place in all the public and private offices, and that too without waiting for any orders from the senate; the usual places of resort were deserted; the houses and shops were shut up; the streets were filled with lamentations; and the whole city, from one extremity to the other, put on a face of the deepest mourning. In a little time after, the general affliction was greatly increased by the arrival of Agrippina, the widow of Germanicus, a woman in high esteem for her virtue, who appeared bearing the ashes of her husband, and attended by two of her children. As she approached the city, she was met by the senate, and the whole body of the people of Rome, with a strange mixture of acclamation and sorrow.

The



The veteran soldiers, many of whom had served under Germanicus, expressed their sorrow in the strongest terms. The whole multitude, while the ashes were depositing in the tomb of Augustus, at first regarded the ceremony with silent concern; but shortly after, as if by common concert, broke out into loud lamentations, crying, that all hopes of liberty were now extinct, and that the commonwealth was undone.

TIBERIUS, sensible that he was strongly suspected of having been privy to the death of Germanicus, endeavoured to wipe off that stain from his character, by consenting to the trial of Piso, who no sooner returned to Rome, than he was accused before the senate, not only of having compassed the death of the prince, but likewise of his having treated good men with unexampled severity, and even of his having made attempts to corrupt the legions. Piso, either conscious of his guilt, or overwhelmed with despair at seeing himself deserted by the emperor, made but a poor defence against any part of the charge. However, the poisoning of Germanicus could not be made out in such a manner as to satisfy his judges. His trial, therefore, was drawn out to a greater length than was expected; but, in the mean time, he cut it short by putting an end to his life in his own house. His wife, Plancina, who was universally believed to be the most guilty of the two, escaped punishment by the interest of Livia; but she was afterwards put to death on another account, and thus, at last, she met with that fate, which, in all probability, she but too well merited.

THE death of Germanicus was not only a loss to the Roman people, as it deprived them of their ablest and most successful general, but as it likewise took off that restraint which the dread of his popularity had hitherto obliged the emperor to put upon his passions; for that salutary check was no sooner removed, than he seemed all at once to alter his nature, and from being, upon the whole, a tolerably just and equitable prince, he became, on a sudden, one of the most cruel and blood-thirsty tyrants that ever existed.

THE law of offended majesty was now revived, and the first person that fell a victim to it was Crematius Cordus, who, in his annals of the Roman empire, had extolled the character of Brutus, and called Cassius the last of the Romans. But this was not his greatest crime; he had been so imprudent as to drop some expressions reflecting on the conduct of Sejanus, the emperor's chief favourite; and it was therefore impossible he should escape with impunity. An accusation was brought against him; and he plainly saw, that his death was resolved. His courage, however, did not desert him, and he defended himself



himself in the senate with equal spirit and eloquence. “My actions (said he) are blameless; and therefore my words are laid hold of to effect my ruin. All historians have mentioned the names of Brutus and Cassius with honour. Several satirical pieces against Julius and Augustus Cæsar are still extant. These great men bore such attacks with patience; and in so doing, I will venture to say, they shewed as much prudence as moderation; for libels soon sink into oblivion when they are despised, but are always sure to rise into importance when their authors are punished. It has, at all times, been lawful to speak well of the dead, who are no longer the objects of fear or of favour. Posterity will do justice to every man, and, if I am condemned, will not only remember Brutus and Cassius, but perhaps even me.”

He then went home, fully resolved to evade the malice of his enemies by a voluntary death. This was the only way to disappoint the avarice of the informers, who could not seize upon the property of the accused till after condemnation; and in spite of all their attempts to prevent him, he found means to put his design in execution. His books were ordered, by the senate, to be burnt; but they were soon after published afresh, and bought up with the greatest avidity. Tacitus, in speaking of Cremutius, says, that severities exercised against men of genius, only help to increase their fame, and that those who have been so foolish as to treat them with rigour, have only thereby disgraced themselves, and proportionably heightened the reputation of the authors.

It was about this time that Tiberius took into his confidence Sejanus, a Roman knight, who found out the method of gaining his favour by the most refined species of flattery, and by a degree of hypocrisy superior to that of the emperor himself. Having mounted, by his intrigues, almost to the very pinnacle of power, he began to form schemes for rising, if he could, still one step higher, and actually seating himself upon the imperial throne. In the prosecution of this project, he thought he might derive a considerable aid from an office, with which he had lately been invested, namely, the command of the prætorian guards; a post, which had hitherto been looked upon but as of very little importance, but which he now hoped he should be able to make subservient to the accomplishment of his ambitious views. He was sensible, however, that cutting off the emperor alone would rather retard than promote his designs, while his son Drusus, and the children of Germanicus, were yet remaining. He began, therefore, by corrupting Livia, the wife of Drusus, whom, after having debauched her, he prevailed upon to make away with her husband.



husband. This was effected (it is said) by means of a slow poison, which gave his death the appearance of a casual distemper. Tiberius, in the mean time, either naturally phlegmatic, or destitute, in some measure, of paternal affection, bore the death of his son with great indifference. He was even heard to jest upon the occasion; for when the ambassadors of Troy came somewhat late with their compliments of condolence, he answered their unseasonable address by condoling with them also upon the death of their countryman Hector.

SEJANUS, having succeeded in this, was resolved to make his next attempt upon the children of Germanicus, who were the undoubted heirs to the crown. But in order to have the emperor more entirely at his devotion, and remove from about him every person, that could in the least thwart his designs, he persuaded him to leave Rome, and retire to the island of Caprea, where he was sure that no kind of intelligence could possibly reach him but by his means. Having taken this necessary precaution, he continued every day to widen the breach between Tiberius and his grand nephew, and at last he rendered it so irreparable, that the two eldest princes, Nero and Drusus, were declared enemies to the state, and afterwards starved to death in prison, while their mother, Agrippina, was driven into banishment. In this manner Sejanus proceeded, removing all who stood between him and the empire, and continually increasing in confidence with Tiberius, and power with the senate. The number of his statues exceeded even those of the emperor; people swore by his fortune, in the same manner they would have done, had he been actually upon the throne, and he was even more dreaded than he that was in possession of the empire. But the rapidity of rise seemed only preparatory to the greatness of the fall. All we know of his first disgrace is, that Satirius Secundus was the man who had the boldness to accuse him, though this he is said to have done on the strength of intelligence received from Antonia, the mother of Germanicus, who herself joined in the accusation.

WHAT were the particulars of his guilt, it is difficult, if not impossible, at this distance of time, to learn. Certain it is, that he had formed a design for usurping the throne, and making an attempt upon the life of the emperor; but his own was justly substituted to that against which he aimed. How to proceed against him, however, was the difficulty. He was, at that time, captain of the Prætorian guards, who were strongly attached to his interest: he had likewise an infinite number of friends in the senate; and these circumstances,



stances, with many others, might have enabled him, had he been so inclined, to raise some very dangerous disturbance.

TIBERIUS conducted the whole affair with his usual caution, or, to speak more properly, with his usual hypocrisy. He granted Sejanus new honours, at the very time he had resolved to destroy him; and the better to carry on the deception, he even chose him for his colleague in the consulship; for it is to be observed, that as the office of consul still subsisted (in name at least) the emperors frequently took it to themselves. Tiberius's letter to the senate began only with slight complaints against his friend, but ended with an order for putting him in prison. He entreated the senators to protect an old man, as he was, abandoned by all the world; and in the mean time proposed steps for his flight, and ordered soldiers for his security. The senate, the majority of which had long been jealous of the favourite's power, and dreaded his cruelty, immediately took this opportunity of going beyond their orders. Instead of sentencing him to execution, they condemned him to death. A strong revolution was now to be seen in the city. Of all those, who but a moment before had been making the favourite a tender of their lives and fortunes, not one was now to be found that would even seem to know him: he was deserted by all; and those who had formerly received from him the greatest benefits, dreading the consequence of such a connection, when it came to the ears of the emperor, seemed now to be converted into his inveterate foes.

As he was conducting to execution, the people loaded him with insults and outrages. If he attempted to hide his face, it was instantly uncovered, that he might suffer the bitterness of shame, as well as the severity of punishment. He was pursued all the way with sarcastic reproaches; his statues were instantly thrown down, and he himself soon after strangled by the executioner. Nor did the rage of his enemies terminate with his death; his body was ignominiously dragged about the streets, and afterwards thrown into the Tiber. Such was the end of Sejanus; a memorable instance of the fickleness of fortune, of the instability of every favourite's power, and the precariousness of every tyrant's friendship.

ODIOUS, however, as Sejanus, no doubt, was, and well as he might merit the fate he met with, there was one circumstance attending his death, that must excite our horror, that must inflame our indignation even against his prosecutors; and shews what barbarians the Romans were, at a time when they had become lords of the universe, and had probably ar-



rived at as great a degree of civilization as they ever attained. The whole family of Sejanus had been condemned to die with him. His eldest son suffered soon after his father. But the youth of his second son, and still more of his daughter, seems to have occasioned some doubt whether they could properly be put to death for a crime, of which, on account of their tender years, they could not possibly be guilty. Some of the judges were at first inclined to mercy; but the fear of offending Tiberius, by an instance of lenity, which himself would not have shewn, was probably the cause of their committing an act of cruelty, which their hearts, in their cooler moments, could not fail to condemn. Both the children were sentenced to death, and carried to prison to be executed. The son was sensible of his misfortune; but the daughter so little knew what the officers were about, that she asked, with tears, what fault she had committed, and where they were conducting her: she protested she would do so no more, and was willing to be corrected. Tacitus and Dio tell us, that as there was no example of a virgin's being capitally punished, an attempt was made to palliate the inhumanity of the deed, though by committing a more violent outrage upon decency; and that the executioner had orders to violate the child before he strangled her.

Most people imagined, that the acts of cruelty, which Tiberius had lately committed, were owing to the advice of Sejanus; but they were soon convinced of the contrary, and found, that they had proceeded from the native malignity of his own heart. The favourite's death had only lighted up his rage for new executions. Sextus Vestilius was now put to death, for having, as it was said, written some satirical verses against Caligula, the only surviving son of Germanicus; but his real fault was, that his severe virtues were become a satire, by implication, upon the vicious life of the emperor. Vespularius Atticus and Julius Marenus, who had been his inseparable companions in Rhodes, were executed by his command for being attached to Sejanus; and Memarcus Scourus was also obliged to prevent his execution by suicide, for having written a tragedy upon the story of Atreus. The suspicious emperor applied to himself the invective that was pointed against tyrants in general; and declared, in rage, that if he was become an Atreus, he would compel the author to become an Ajax. Vitia, a woman at the extremity of old age, was put to death, for having wept at the execution of her son, who had been a friend to Sejanus. Tufius, and his wife Publia, being accused of treason against the emperor, were obliged to prevent their condemnation by a voluntary death.

Confidius



Confidius Proculus, as he was celebrating his birth-day, found himself, in an instant, dragged before the senate, accused of conspiring against the emperor, and condemned, and he was soon after executed. Sextus Marcus was put to death, partly on account of his riches, which were immense, but still more on account of the beauty of his daughter, whom the emperor wanted to enjoy.

THE infamous trade of informers now came greatly into vogue, and gave occasion to many shocking scenes. A word, a jest, a look, nay a mere absence of mind was wrested to an ill meaning, and converted into treason. An old prætor very narrowly escaped an accusation of this sort, because being pressed by a natural occasion, he forgot to take off his ring, on which was a head of the emperor.

ANOTHER instance occurred, that may be regarded as a monster in the moral world. A son was so unnatural as to accuse his own father, who appeared in court loaded with chains, and overwhelmed with sorrow, while the other pleaded with all the gaiety and assurance imaginable. The unhappy father was banished, and some of the judges even gave their opinion for putting him to death, only because he had incurred the displeasure of Tiberius.

THE prisons were now crowded either with real or supposed culprits, though most of them were confined on account of their being suspected of having been privy to the conspiracy of Sejanus. Tiberius began to grow tired of the tedious forms of law, and he therefore gave orders, that all who were detained on this latter account should be put to death without further examination. The consequence was, that the whole city was filled with slaughter and mourning. The place of execution was a deplorable scene, where persons of every sex and age were exposed, racked, and mangled; dead bodies, putrefying, lay heaped on one another; and being surrounded by guards, who served at the same time as spies, the friends of the convicts dared not even to discover the least symptom of sorrow.

SUCH were the miseries that were brought upon the Romans by this gloomy and merciless tyrant; no person, however victorious, could be safe; or rather, every virtue was but the sure road to ruin. Of twenty senators, whom he chose for his council, he put sixteen to death. "Let them hate me (said he) so long as they obey me." He even declared, that, in his opinion, Priam, was a happy man, who outlived all his posterity. So savage, indeed, was his temper, that he was not satisfied with depriving men of their lives, unless he likewise made them suffer the most exquisite torments,



and the most shameful indignities. When one Cornelius had killed himself, to avoid the torture; “Ah, (cried Tiberius) how has that man been able to escape me!” And on another occasion, as he was reviewing some prisoners, and one of them begged for immediate death; “No (cried the tyrant) I am not sufficiently your friend to shorten your torment.” Sometimes he was pleased to be witty in his cruelties. Augustus had bequeathed the sum of three hundred sesterces to every Roman citizen. Tiberius, it seems, had not yet paid this legacy. In order, therefore, to remind him of his duty, a wag, seeing a funeral procession pass by, went up to it, and whispered something in the ear of the corpse; and when he was asked what he had been saying to it, he replied, that he desired it to acquaint Augustus, that his will had not yet been executed. Tiberius, not approving of this piece of wit, sent for the man, and having paid him his share of the bequest, carried him immediately to be executed.

A FEW days after he was retired to Caprea, a fisherman brought him a mullet of a prodigious size; and being unwilling to declare where he had caught it, he caused him to be beat about the face with it. He so much exercised himself in all sorts of cruelty, that all subjects afforded him opportunities of indulging his temper; but with great virulence did he persecute the particular friends of his mother, her grand-children, and daughter-in-law.

THE jealous and persecuting temper of Tiberius was rather increased than diminished by the death of Sejanus. In one respect, however, it was productive of some relaxation; for the emperor soon discovered that the crimes which Sejanus had imputed to and charged upon the Jews, at that time tributary to the Romans, and under their civil government, had principally originated in himself. Only a few notorious offenders were left to the severity of the laws; the rest were set at liberty, and encouraged, by an order of Tiberius to all the governors of provinces, who began to consider the Jews as lovers of peace, and their customs as conducing to the public welfare and tranquility.

THE Sybilline books received an addition by the discovery of a new volume, which was now adopted by a decree of the senate. This, indeed, was not so pleasing a matter to the emperor, who at this time afflicted more and more the city and nobility by his subtle, jealous, and tyrannical conduct. Though he lived at such a distance from Rome, in a state of retirement, the degeneracy of the senate, with the information of spies, and other wicked instruments, which are never wanting in such cases, occasioned an infinite number of accusations,



fations, punishments, and executions. Such was the unfortunate condition of Rome and the Roman people. A concern for the glory of the empire was interpreted into a design of gaining it; and an innocent remembrance of liberty was considered as an aim to re-establish the commonwealth. It was a capital crime to praise Brutus and Cassius; a very heinous offence to bewail Augustus. Simplicity of discourse was considered as concealing some evil designs; and a secret silence, as a cloak for mischievous intentions. The passion of joy indicated a hope of the emperor's death; of melancholy, as envying his prosperity; of fear, as the just apprehensions of a guilty conscience.

IN so unhappy a state were the Roman people, during the latter part of the reign of Tiberius, that whether men spoke with freedom of the posture of public affairs, or were entirely silent upon matters relating to the emperor or his government; whether they were affected with joy or grief, fear or confidence; every thing was a crime, according to the caprice or partiality of the reigning powers, and the heaviest punishments were often inflicted for actions which, in many respects, were highly commendable, and in any case scarcely merited the opprobrium of a censure. For virtue and a cautious prudence were no security at this time to great men; it was not sufficient for them to be freed from the corruptions of accusers, and the false reports and injurious suspicions, of those who were spies upon their conduct; for even the bare imagination of the emperor was a cause sufficient to excite fears, and jealousies, and apprehensions for their personal safety. When, by their innocence, they supposed, as they had reason, that they were perfectly secure; the malice and subtilty of his conjectures might intercept all their hopes, and plunge them in irretrievable ruin.

THE death of Drusus, whom we have mentioned already, probably hastened the destruction of Sejanus. He studied, in his present retirement at Caprea, how to devise new torments, of the most horrible kind; for he spared no body, and only seemed to live for the exercise of the most dreadful cruelties. Many, whom he had caused to drink wine to excess, were afterwards punished, by most cruel ligatures about their privy parts, which were productive of extreme pain, both from the ligature itself and the retention of their urine.

IN his absence from Rome, two consuls had the power and management of the sovereignty; and though, by his cruelties, he made himself odious and detestable, yet, whether from boldness or desperation, there were not wanting some persons who dared to expose him to disgrace and ignominy. His fears were



frequently predominant and unruly; and though he had destroyed the oracles in the vicinity of Rome, lest they should be deemed superior to himself, he secretly applies to some cunning diviners, from whom he wishes to be informed of his future fate.

So frequently was he upbraided with his vices, that he was tempted to wish for their concealment; though at other times, such was the inconsistency of his character, that he mocks at the reproaches of his subjects, and becomes the proclaimer of his own enormities. These were, in consequence of such various causes, so much divulged and propagated, that Artabanus, king of Parthia, after reproaching him for his parricides, his murders, his effeminacy, and his violation of every principle of chastity, advises him to commit an act of suicide, to satisfy the hatred and just indignation of his subjects.

CONSIDERING the little veneration which he had for the gods, his consultation of astrologers, and the great belief which he had in destiny, are somewhat astonishing. He was extremely intimidated with the sound of thunder; and, in stormy weather, always wore a laurel crown, attentive to the tradition that this tree never experiences any disagreeable effects from it. It is generally believed that he had some presentiments of his death, and some absurd stories are related as instances of his extreme fearfulness; but when he was really seized with the malady, which brought on his dissolution, at Asturia, he took much pains to conceal his indisposition, and had some awful apprehensions of the consequences of a discovery, which might have terminated in a revolt from his allegiance.

SOME historians have recorded that he had been poisoned by Caius Caligula, the only son of his nephew Germanicus who had escaped the general destruction, whom he had adopted as heir to the government, in conjunction with a young grandson, named Tiberius, the son of Drusus. In this respect, considering the common practice which then prevailed, though we shall not determine, the probability is in favour of such an opinion. The increase of his distemper prevented him from returning to Caprea, and after a few days he died at the country house of Lucullus, in the 78th year of his age, and 23d of his reign, on the 16th day of March. Seneca, who flourished and perished in less than thirty years after, and must then have been living, has thus described his last moments. “ Perceiving that his strength failed him, he took  
“ his ring from his finger, which he held for some time, as if  
“ he wished to deliver it to some person about him; but after-  
“ wards putting it again upon his finger, and holding his left  
“ hand close, he continued a long time without motion. At  
“ last,



“last, having called his domestics, and no one answering him,  
 “he suddenly raised himself, but his strength failed him, and  
 “he fell down by the side of his bed.”

It may probably seem, that literature, notwithstanding these enormities in the conduct of Tiberius, flourished and increased during his reign; but that is a matter much to be doubted. Fond of literary pursuits himself, the jealousy and envy of his temper were a check upon those of others. Celsus, Strabo, and Phædrus, are the only names of eminence which are handed down to us, as distinguished for their knowledge and learning; and almost every one knows with what cautious prudence the last was obliged to publish his sentiments in such an age of suspicion and apprehension. Tiberius wrote an elegy upon the decease of Augustus, and some Greek poems, which he deposited in the public libraries, amongst the most celebrated authors of preceding times; and he peculiarly applied himself to fabulous history, which he frequently used in proposing the most frivolous and ridiculous questions. As a proof that he wished to be considered as superior to others, he would suffer none to speak in the Greek language, and therefore took measures to prevent the appearance of competition.

By his will, which was made two years before his death, and written with his own hand, he left the empire jointly to his two grandsons, as we have said; and gave many legacies to divers persons, and amongst others to the vestal virgins, the soldiers, and all the citizens, and peculiarly to the various deputies of the provinces.

## C H A P. XXVI.

CAIUS CALIGULA, *the Third* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 785. A. D. 37]

NOTWITHSTANDING the will and declaration of Tiberius, the Romans, who found a short breathing after his death, manifested an extreme partiality for Caligula, and declared him sole emperor. The disposition of Caius was well known to Tiberius; and many have supposed, that he named him for a successor, in the hope that the vices of the latter would efface the memory of the former. This was



not so well understood by the people, and therefore the rejoicings at the death of a tyrant, as might well be supposed, were unbounded, and manifested themselves by every possible demonstration of pleasure and satisfaction.

For the sake of his father, and in compassion to their desolated family, as well as by the will of Augustus, he came to the empire with universal approbation and consent. As he had spent the greater part of his life in the provinces, and amongst the soldiers, his disposition, which had occasionally broke forth, was but little familiar to the people of Rome; and they welcomed his entrance into that city with the greatest effusions of sacrifice. It is said that 160,000 cattle were sacrificed in three months time in different parts of the empire. And so great was the superstition of the citizens, that when he was sick, some offered themselves to combat with wild beasts for his safety, and others devoted themselves to death at his recovery.

THE beginning of his reign was, indeed, distinguished by extraordinary instances of clemency and regularity. The institutions of Augustus, which Tiberius had laid aside, were revived; many abuses in the state were reformed; evil and corrupt governors were punished, and, in particular, the Roman governor of Judæa was banished, who had so lately and cruelly sentenced to an ignominious death the Lord of Life and Glory. He gave to the magistrates a free jurisdiction, who were to judge of crimes committed against the state without farther appeal. He recalled from banishment the numerous exiles, who had been driven from their country, and granted a general amnesty for all their past offences; and to remove every cause of fear, he ordered all the records and proceedings against his family to be collected together and set on fire, after calling the gods to witness that he had read none of them, and had not so much as touched them. Many other regulations were made at his entrance upon the empire; nor did he forget the sacred rites which were due to the memory of his own family, whom Tiberius had so cruelly caused to be murdered.

It was one of the first acts of his reign, after paying the last tribute of duty to his predecessor in the empire, to fetch the ashes of his mother and brother from the island of Pontus; exposing himself to the dangers of a tempest, that his piety might appear to greater advantage, which he received with much veneration, and put them in urns with his own hand. They were conveyed to Ostium at the mouth of the Tiber, in a galley, and from thence to Rome up that river, and deposited in the Mausoleum by the most illustrious persons. He  
appointed



appointed two solemn services to be celebrated annually to their memory. In honour of his father, he wished the month of September to be called Germanicus.

WE cannot enumerate the various means, by which, at the beginning of his reign, he set himself to gain the favour and esteem of his subjects. He twice entertained, in the most magnificent manner, the senators and knights, with their wives and children; and, on the second occasion, he presented the men with royal robes, and the women and children with purple ribbons. The pastimes of gladiators, pugilism, the circus, with races, &c. were very highly encouraged. General illuminations were frequently displayed; and sometimes he caused to be thrown to the people handfuls of money, with provisions, and other comforts of life. He was the first emperor who had ever instituted the diversion of a boat race. He also proposed rewards for eloquence, and devised other amusements for the pleasure and satisfaction of his subjects; and embraced the most likely means of exciting in their minds a spirit of emulation.

By this gentle treatment in the early part of his reign, he so strongly secured the affections of the people that they almost idolized him. This grateful testimony of public approbation, though no more than his due, served to infatuate and intoxicate his mind; he was not proof against the delusions of such interloping visitors, and began to fancy himself that superior being, which his subjects vainly declared him to be. From that moment, his whole conduct and disposition were changed. The first effect of his assuming divine honours, was, to build a temple, which he dedicated to his own divinity; and, he was not satisfied barely with placing his own statues amongst those of the gods, but he decapitated many of those already set up in the temples, over which he placed the figure of himself.

It was during the first few months of his mild government, that he banished Pontius Pilate, who had, little more than three years before, rashly and wickedly condemned the Lord of Life, against the checks of his own conscience and the remonstrances of his wife; without evidence of any thing to justify his detention, much less his death, merely to gratify the clamours of an inconsiderate mob, instigated by the Jewish priests and rulers.

THE temple of Augustus, and Pompey's amphitheatre, were both completed by this emperor. He also repaired the decayed walls and temples of Syracuse, and formed a design to restore the royal palace of Samos, to finish the temple of



Apollo, and to build a city upon the very summit of the Alpine mountains; but these were not carried into effect.

THE prodigality and pride of Caligula equally contributed to hasten the change of his conduct. Of the former we have numerous instances on record; such as, the madness of dissolving pearls, the most valuable and precious in their kind, and drinking them at feasts and public entertainments, and serving up loaves and provisions of gold, boasting, that “a man should “be an economist, or an emperor.” Of the great variety of expences which he contrived and invented, it would be tedious to enlarge; but we are informed that he spent in one year sixty seven million and fifty thousand crowns, according to the most moderate account which is left on record.

His pride transformed him from the conduct of a king or emperor, to the behaviour of a monster. Notwithstanding the pious acts of filial duty, so conspicuous at his accession to the empire, he now proceeds to disclaim his ancestry, refusing to be considered as the grandson of Augustus, and declaring the festival solemnities instituted to his honour, for the victories of Actium and Sicily, should be abolished. He caused his grandfather Antony and his brother Tiberius to be murdered, on the most frivolous pretences; and his godfather also shared a similar fate, because that he had not accompanied him on the sea, the agitation of which he could never endure. He suffered his uncle Claudius to live, only to make him a subject of mockery and ridicule.

THE incest to which he obliged all his sisters to submit, was notorious, and a matter of public scandal; and every one in their turn sat down in the place and character of his wife. One of them, in particular, called Drusilla was appointed heir to the empire and all his effects, at the time of his being afflicted with sickness; but on her death, which happened before his own, he was inconsolable, and forbid every indulgence in the most innocent amusements, on pain of death. He suddenly and secretly left the city for Syracuse, and afterwards, on all occasions, swore by the divinity of Drusilla. His respect for his other sisters was less; and he afterwards found means of condemning and banishing them, under a pretence of having some designs upon his life.

His marriages and divorces were equally shameful and disgraceful. He took away the wife of Piso, whom he detained for two years, only because the other had said, “That “nobody ought to touch his wife,” and declared by a public edict, that he had married her, after the manner and in imitation of Romulus and Augustus. In like manner he compelled Caius Memmius, a man of consular dignity, to surrender his  
wife



wife to him, whom he took in marriage, after she was brought to bed, and honoured with the name of his wife; declaring publicly that he was the father of the child, which she had, and carrying it to the temples of all the goddesses, he put the child into the arms of Minerva, to whose protection he recommended his daughter, whom he called Julia Drusilla.

AMONGST other fantastical proceedings, he devised means of sowing the seeds of discord betwixt the Roman knights and the common people, by causing the public sports to begin at an earlier hour than usual; from whence it happened that the places of the knights were occupied by people of lower condition in life. And, not content with these things, he caused the public granaries to be shut up, and a famine was announced to the citizens.

NUMEROUS were the cruelties which he wantonly exercised upon the people. He condemned many persons of quality to the mines, after shamefully disfiguring them, and compelled them to repair the roads, and to do other acts of servility. Fathers and mothers were even compelled to assist at the punishment of their children.

His language also was not less insolent than his actions were barbarous. Having designed his brother's death, he thought that some preservative had been used by him for fear of being poisoned; on which he exclaimed, "What dost thou use an antidote against Cæsar?" A prætor, who had been retired to the island of Anticyra, on account of his indisposition, had frequently entreated leave of longer absence; on which the emperor commanded his death, saying, "That blood was necessary to him who had so long used hellebore without any consolation." Every ten days he accustomed himself to sign the sentence of death against prisoners; this he called, "purging his book of reason." He was a great adept in lingering out punishments. It was an usual direction at executions, which he very commonly attended in person, "Strike in such a manner that they may feel themselves die;" and when he had been deceived with a man's name, whom he had caused to be executed instead of another, he said, "that he had merited it full as much." His cruelties, indeed, had no bounds; and he declared that "he was regardless of their hating him, so long as they feared him." Frequently did he treat the most respectable of the senators with the haughtiest language, as the friends of Sejanus, or informers against his mother and brethren; and justified the cruelty of Tiberius, which he attributed to necessity.

In depriving many distinguished citizens of their ancient honours, his envy at the applauses of the multitude to



Prolemy, when he entered the theatre to be a witness of the games, is particularly to be noticed ; whom he first degraded, and then destroyed.

Not to mention his immodesty, and the prostitution of all decency and propriety ; his expensive follies were productive of all sorts of rapines and plunders. He caused many wills to be superseded, and, under various pretences, sequestered the effects of deceased persons to his own use ; and levied a contribution on many rich persons in Gaul, by an invitation to the honour of supping with him, for which, it was sufficiently intimated, they should deposit a considerable sum. No sort of fraud or dissimulation was wanting, to raise supplies for these extravagancies. He laid a tax upon lives, and proceedings in the civil courts ; even porters and prostitutes did not escape him, who purchased by money the privilege of carrying on their several professions, insomuch that he authorized a brothel within his palace.

THE birth of a daughter was a new source or cause of imposition and oppression. He called for a bounty to support this additional appendage to his family, as well as to lay up a portion for her ; and he now became so extremely avaricious, that he literally rolled in money.

IN the course of his reign, he was only once engaged in war, and that was accidental and without design. Suddenly, on a journey of pleasure which he made, to take a view of some woods and rivers, he was struck with a fancy of making war upon the Germans ; for which he instantly made new levies of troops, recruited his standing forces, provided the necessary baggage, and marched with as much precipitation, as if the empire had been hourly threatened with an invasion. The colours or ensigns were obliged to be conveyed on horseback, such was the rapidity of the first motions ; when, all at once, he changed his plan, and advanced so slowly, that he only caused himself to be carried in a litter by eight men, but ordered that the people of the villages, by which he was to pass, should sprinkle the roads with water, and sweep them, on account of the dust.

THERE cannot be a stronger proof of his wanton and arbitrary conduct, than the injurious treatment of the officers of this army, and his oppression of the soldiers ; by curtailing the latter of a considerable part of their pay, and by discharging such of the former, without means of existence, as were become weak and infirm, through age or misfortune. Yet his vanity led him to receive into his protection, the son of Cinobellinus, king of Britain, who had been expelled by his father.



It soon appeared that this German expedition was unnecessary; but he would not return, until he had made a shew of doing something, which he effected, first, by ordering a party of his guards secretly to cross the Rhine, and then, by causing an alarm to be sounded, after hastily approaching to the next forest, he cut down branches from the trees, as trophies of some victory obtained, which he disposed in a suitable form, and returned with flambeaus, torches, &c. with great pomp and solemnity. Mock crowns, representing the sun, moon, and stars, were rewards assigned to the companions of this expedition; whilst those who declined it were accused of timidity.

ANOTHER similar expedition was speedily set on foot, against some tributary states; of whom he caused it to be reported, that an insurrection had commenced. On receiving this news, he rose instantly from table, and immediately mounting his horse, he pursued with some cavalry the hostages which had been suffered to escape; and, having taken them, he returned to supper, and made those who had brought the intelligence, that the forces were retired, to sit at table with him.

STILL more preposterous and absurd was the marching to, and the marshalling his army on the sea-coast, as if he designed them for some expedition; when, all on a sudden, he gave orders for their gathering as many cockles as their helmets and doublets would contain, which he termed “the spoils of the ocean.” For this doughty expedition, he had thoughts of preparing a triumph, and actually made arrangements for it; but it passed over with a small triumph on his birthday.

TERRIBLE as were the evils of his reign, he had meditated much greater than these. It appeared from two books, which were found in his cabinet after his death, one of which was called *the Sword*, and the other *the Poignard*, that many citizens had been doomed to death; and he had prepared such variety of the most exquisite poisons, that the very fish of the Tiber were killed by them, when they were afterwards thrown into it by the command of his successor.

It would be to little purpose to give a description of his person, which was not the most engaging. His affectation of appearing in women’s apparel, sometimes habited as a goddess, and other absurdities, were sufficient to render him truly contemptible. His eccentricities relating to his horse, were equally preposterous; and his conduct, in every respect, was such as made him odious.



IN taking a review of his government of more distant provinces, much of the same disposition and character are met with. For this reign, short as it was, afforded many opportunities of change in the tributary and dependant governments, in various parts of the Roman empire. The banishment of Pontius Pilate made way for the advancement of Marullus to the government of Judæa and Samaria. Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, was also advanced by the emperor to be governor of Palestine, from a particular friendship which they had contracted; he had formerly been in favour with Tiberius, but from some suspicion had been sent to prison, from whence he was now restored to liberty by Caligula, arrayed in royal robes, with a chain of gold and a diadem. He continued at Rome about a year, and then went to Palestine to settle his kingdom.

WHEN Agrippa, by advice of the emperor, was arrived at Alexandria in Egypt, which he took in his way, he met with a most unwelcome reception. The governor, Flaccus, instigated the inhabitants, whose inveterate hatred against the Jews needed little incitement, to ridicule and expose him in their stages, songs, speeches and all public places; thinking themselves highly affronted at the arrival of a king of that nation. Their scoffings increased speedily to much greater violence; and the people of Alexandria, by encouragement of their governor, unanimously set up the images of the emperor, who had lately proclaimed himself a God, in all the synagogues and oratories of that people. When this was refused, they were burnt and demolished without distinction; the Jews, by public edict, were declared foreigners and strangers, denied the liberty of pleading their cause, and condemned without a hearing. To so great an extent were these violences permitted, that the common people were suffered to plunder their houses, which occasioned the most barbarous murders, and other intolerable cruelties. Some were burned alive, and tortured by slow fires; others were crucified, and many hanged. Old men were dragged along the streets, and cruelly scourged; many were tied to wheels, and others dragged with cords by the legs, through the market place, with the insults of the rabble, who did not spare them after they were dead. Even their young women, such was the insatiation and disregard of all decency and modesty, were shamefully exposed and most ignominiously treated.

ON the representation of these enormities to the emperor by Agrippa, who had partly been a spectator of them, and on whose account they had commenced, Bassus, a centurion, is sent to Alexandria; who upon his arrival after these outrages

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had continued for two months, arrested Flaccus, and brought him to Italy, from whence he was banished and afterwards put to death. After this, Agrippa relieved the Jews of Alexandria from the effects of these commotions, and settled himself in his dominions. This created the envy of Herodias, who prevailed upon her husband to solicit this dignity from the emperor by the powerful rhetoric of magnificent presents; being enraged at this advancement of Agrippa from a dungeon to a throne, and the power as well as title and ornaments of a king which he had obtained. Agrippa, who was aware of this stratagem, informed the emperor, by letter, of this subtle manœuvre, accompanying it with presents; which also accused Herod of conspiring formerly with Sejanus against Tiberius, and of his favouring Artabanus, king of Parthia, against Caligula himself, for whose service he had prepared arms sufficient for 70,000 men. As this last fact could not be denied, the traitor was immediately deprived of the governments both of Galilee and Peræa, his riches seized and himself banished, with his wife, to Gaul. Agrippa became the fortunate possessor both of their riches and dominions. About this time Pontius Pilate, who had been governor of Judæa and Samaria in the reign of Tiberius, but banished by Caligula, was reduced to extreme misery, and killed himself with his own hands; so signally did the justice of heaven overtake him, as it had before done the betrayer of the Lord of Life and Glory.

THE pride and madness of the emperor became more and more insupportable; and the Jews, who chiefly opposed this monstrous humour of ascribing divinity to him, severely suffered on that account. Petronius, who had been made governor of Syria, received express orders from Caligula to dedicate a large and costly image to him, and to set it up in the very temple of Jerusalem. To make the dedication more pompous, and to prevent all possible resistance, the statue was to be accompanied by half the army, which was stationed near Euphrates, for the protection of the east; it was to be placed in the sanctuary of the temple, which from thenceforth was to be called “The Temple of Illustrious Caius, and Propitious Jupiter.” All Palestine and Judæa were thrown into the greatest consternation at this intelligence; but, by the greatest submission, and the most distressing marks of supplication, Petronius found means to postpone, for a short time, the execution of this command, and at the same time, though with extreme hazard, to satisfy the emperor. Agrippa, on his return to Rome, ventured still farther, though he well knew Caligula’s extravagant humour and vanity, and obtain-  
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ed an assurance, after much ingenuity and address, of which he was master, that the statue should not be dedicated.

THE numerous cruelties and extravagances, which he daily committed, rendered him insupportable to the public. He proved, what his predecessor Tiberius had ominously predicted of him, another phaeton to the world, who, by his mad and ungoverned career, was, with all speed, setting it on fire. But he was soon consumed in those very flames, which he had so industriously and furiously blown up; and when it was discovered, that neither his own reason, the humility of his subjects, nor the laws of his country, had any influence over him, to restrain him within the bounds of moderation, or to divert him from his tyrannical proceedings, conspiracies consequently were formed against him, which, in the end, though some of them miscarried, proved fatal.

It was during the celebration of one of the public games, of which he was remarkably fond, and in which he frequently bore a considerable part, that the long-meditated stroke was given. Politic as he had been on many occasions, in devising modes of setting the different classes of people in opposition to one another, his oppressions were intolerable; and all heartily desired to be freed from such a tyrant. Cassius Chæreas, an officer of his guards, was the person who undertook this dangerous task; and though it was necessary to engage others in the design, to which many of the senators, knights, and others, were unavoidable parties, all possible vigour and resolution were employed in promoting it.

MANY presages of his death, according to the custom of those times, were manifest. It was even known by an oracle, which declared, that a person named Cassius, was to be instrumental in his death; but he never suspected the real character, whose usual name was Cheræas, the suspicion immediately falling upon Cassius Longinus, governor of Asia, whom he caused immediately to be destroyed.

ABOUT seven in the morning, of the 24th of January, and 41st year of the Christian Æra, he was persuaded to rise and leave his apartments, on complaining of a load in his stomach, in consequence of the banquets on the preceding day. In a private gallery, through which the emperor usually passed to the baths, Chæreas, with a sufficient number of companions, was placed; who seized an opportunity, whilst he was speaking to some young Asiatics, to give him a stab, with this expression, "Think upon this," which was followed by another from Cornelius Sabinus, another officer, who run him through. He still survived, and the rest of the conspirators, as well as Chæreas, repeated their strokes, till they had completely



pletely dispatched him. At the same time his wife Cæsonia fell a victim to their resentment; and, in order to extirpate the whole race of such a tyrant, they dashed out the brains of his only daughter, being an infant, against the wall. Thus was the mad career of a despot concluded, in the 29th year of his age, after a short reign of three years, ten months and eight days.

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## C H A P XXVII,

CLAUDIUS, *the Fourth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 793. A. D. 41.]

THE confusion of the citizens on the first publication of the murder, may better be conceived than described. Such was the known temper and disposition of Caligula, that many were in doubt whether it did not conceal some dark design of the emperor against the people; on which supposition, the caution exercised in expressing their sentiments respecting that event, is alone to be accounted for. But the disturbances of the palace soon manifested the authenticity of the report; and the murders which were committed in it left no room to hesitate, that the tyrant was no more.

CLAUDIUS, who was then in the 50th year of his age, notwithstanding the cruelty of his nephew Caligula to all his relations, had been reserved for the diversion and entertainment of that tyrant. When a youth, his weakness and simplicity were so extreme, that neither his mother or grandmother could endure him in their presence. Augustus had only left him a small legacy, and never suffered him to possess the least honours. When his mother was desirous of reproofing any person, she would say, "He was a greater fool than her son Claudius;" and his sister, on its being one day repeated, that he would hereafter be emperor, said openly, "It would be the greatest misfortune, which could happen to the Roman people." Tiberius, throughout his reign, would never permit him to be advanced to the consulship; who, in  
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like manner, after the example of Augustus, only bequeathed a small legacy to him, recommending him to the army, the senate, and the citizens.

CALIGULA had, indeed, but with the design just mentioned, admitted him to certain offices; for he exercised that of joint consul with the emperor, and also sometimes presided at the shows in the place of his nephew, at which the people testified their satisfaction, both as he was the uncle of Caligula, and also as the son of Germanicus, whose memory was so revered. Yet on other occasions he manifested great signs of folly and stupidity, and often was affronted and ridiculed in the grossest manner.

BEING constantly about the palace, on the rumour of his nephew's death, he expected nothing but immediate destruction, and thereupon concealed himself in a gallery behind some curtains which hung before the door. Here it was that he was discovered by a soldier, whose curiosity, on perceiving his feet, induced him to the resolution of drawing him from his concealment; when, on finding that it was Claudius, he threw himself on his knees, and saluted him as emperor, before the panic and fear of death had passed off. Being instantly put into a litter, he was carried round the camp upon their shoulders; and here he attracted the compassion of all, in consideration of his simplicity and innocence. The night was spent in the camp, where a body-guard was appointed him; during which time, the consuls and the senate, with the militia of the city, had seized upon the palace and the capitol, determining to restore public liberty. Great variety of opinions prevailed among the senators, and at last Claudius was sent for to give his advice, who returned for answer, that he was not at liberty to come; and when, after he had been proclaimed emperor by the soldiers, they sent again to dissuade him from it, and advised him not to disturb the public peace, Agrippa, with much difficulty, made his way through the multitude, and encouraged him to retain the power which the army had given him. The senate were consequently obliged to submit to the public voice, which demanded a governor; and the soldiers, determined to support their choice, voluntarily took an oath of fidelity, upon which he was universally acknowledged.

CLAUDIUS, for the reasons already given, was most unlikely to arrive at such a dignity. His bodily distempers, gross stupidity, and extreme timidity, had been insurmountable obstacles to his holding any public offices, except as we have mentioned. After he arrived to the government of the empire, his administration was of a similar nature; though, in  
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the beginning of his reign, by abolishing the cruel edicts of Caligula, and forbidding all persons to sacrifice to him, he gained great popularity and applause.

AGRIPPA, who had been promoted and advanced by Caligula, was still farther honoured by Claudius. Not only his former dominions were confirmed to him, but Samaria and Judæa were added to them; so that he was governor of all Palestine. The gratitude and kindness of the emperor were still farther manifested, by additional commendations; and their alliance was engraved in brass, to perpetuate its existence. He was also made consul, and he gave Pretorian dignity to his brother Herod, with the kingdom of Colchis. The Jews, at the instigation of the citizens, were forbid, indeed, to assemble publicly in Rome, on account of their numbers, so that their colleges were suppressed, and their other usual places of resort; but in every other part of the empire, and especially at Alexandria, where such great disturbances had formerly happened under Caligula, public edicts were proclaimed in their favour.

AGRIPPA, who was a zealous observer of the Jewish law, remonstrated strongly against an act of the Dorians, bordering on Phœnicia, and informed Petronius, governor of Syria, that they had placed the emperor's image in the Jewish synagogue; on which Petronius, who was equally displeased, commanded the magistrates to punish the guilty persons immediately, which put an end to the disturbance.

NOTWITHSTANDING the moderation of Claudius, he did not neglect to make an example of a few of the conspirators against Caligula. Divine honours were also commanded to be paid to the memory of his grandmother, and public sacrifices to his father and mother, with annual sports on his father's birth day. He finished the marble arch near Pompey's theatre, and caused to be put amongst the feasts the day of Caius's assassination, as the commencement of his own empire.

CONSPIRACIES were not wholly unknown in his reign; but they were detected and prevented. A man was found about his chamber, amongst a crowd; with a poignard; and two knights, on other occasions, were armed to attack him. A civil commotion was also stirred up by Gallus Asinius and Statilius Corvinus, followed by many slaves and freemen; and Furius Camillus Scribonianus, who commanded in Dalmatia, formed the design of a civil war, but was forsaken by his legions in the space of five days. They had taken an oath of fidelity to the emperor, and that consideration prevailed to keep them to their duty.



HIS attention to the distribution of justice was assiduous and exemplary. He was four times consul, and did not always scrupulously regard the letter of the law in the judgments which he made, but frequently softened their severity with such a sweetness as to him appeared reasonable; and he made many regulations amongst the pleaders or professed advocates, particularly guarding and protecting their unfortunate clients from extortion and fraud, by denouncing the most exemplary punishments against all such offenders.

EXCEPTING his military expedition to Britain, we have nothing to record of a warlike nature considerably important. The senate had decreed him triumphal ornaments, of which he thought he ought not to accept, without some achievement to justify the honour. He determined, therefore, to go to Britain, where no person had been since Julius Cæsar; with whom he feigned to have cause of dissatisfaction, as they had not restored some deserters. A violent storm prevented his embarkation at the port of Ostium; but when at last he came into England from Calais, and part of the island submitted to him in a few days, without opposition or effusion of blood, he returned to Rome in about six months, where he triumphed with great state and solemnity.

ONE of the first acts of the reign of Claudius was, to recall Petronius from the government of Syria; whether at the instigation of the malcontents among the Dorians, or on some other account, it is not perhaps easy to determine. Ubius Marfus, who was sent in his room, discovered much opposition to Agrippa, for which reason the Jews were treated with less courtesy; the jealousy of the emperor was excited, on the report of Marfus, to enjoin Agrippa to desist from his magnificent fortifications round Jerusalem, which had been represented as dangerous to the state, and tending to destroy their subordination to the Roman government.

AGRIPPA, thus disappointed in his favourite design, built a noble and spacious theatre, with baths and porticoes, at Berytus in Phœnicia; which was opened, with its amphitheatre, by a display of all kinds of music and feastings, plays and spectacles, splendidly decorated, and a formal combat of 1400 malefactors, in imitation of the Roman gladiators. After this he entertained five kings at one time at Tiberias, whither he had retired, with the Roman governor Marfus; on which the latter, suspecting that some dangerous alliance was in contemplation, regardless of the laws of hospitality and society, immediately gave orders to every one of them (as tributaries to the Roman government, and under his command) to depart to their own country. From that time  
Agrippa



Agrippa conceived a mortal hatred against Marfus, and spared no measures to induce Claudius to remove him from the government of Syria.

FROM an anxious desire of obtaining popularity among the Jews, Agrippa severely persecuted the followers of the crucified Jesus, and many suffered under his tyranny. On his coming to Cæsarea, he proclaimed solemn games and other festival entertainments in respect to the emperor; upon which a great confluence of the nobility and magistrates from all parts assembled, when he submitted to the flattery of some of his dependants without the least disapprobation, and permitted their attributing divine honours to him. But he was overtaken by the just judgment of Heaven; and, after suffering the most excruciating torments for five days, he died in a most miserable and distressing manner.

CUSPIUS FADUS was appointed president of Judea, and of all Agrippa's dominions, in which Marfus was not suffered to interfere; with orders to punish those who had insulted the memory of his deceased friend, and the indecencies and affronts which the Cæsareans had offered to his daughters. The year following Marfus was recalled from his government of Syria; when his successor, Cassius Longinus, in conjunction with Fadus, marched with considerable forces to Jerusalem, and demanded, in the name of the emperor, "that all the high priests robes and ornaments should be lodged in the castle Antonia, and be at the disposal of the Romans." Though the rulers of the Jews dared not to contradict this command, yet, after many submissions and acts of security on their part, they obtained leave to represent their hardships to the emperor, and to request a continuance of their privileges. By the intercession of Agrippa's son, who was then at Rome, and pleaded hard for his countrymen, the Jews obtained a decree in their favour. Herod, king of Chalcis also, by a petition to the emperor, obtained full power over the temple at Jerusalem; and at this time Fadus, by a body of horse dispatched for the purpose, routed a Jewish mob which had assembled under the influence of a magician, took their leader, and many prisoners also fell into his hands.

CLAUDIUS, notwithstanding his simplicity and timidity, greatly encouraged all public works; and put a finishing hand to many which were left imperfect. He brought water into the city by means of a canal or aqueduct, and rebuilt the theatre of Pompey; he also instituted various exercises, and made great improvements in the circus, in which he caused the surrender of the British kings to be represented, with a naval engagement, and other devices.



He decreed that none should be eligible to the dignity of a senator, whose family had not been Roman citizens for three generations; and that all sons of strangers should be first adopted by a Roman knight, before they were admitted to the rank of citizens. Such libertines and licentious persons as called themselves Roman knights, had their goods confiscated; and if they proceeded to complain of it as a hardship, he reduced them to the state of slaves. He made many regulations with respect to slaves, judging all persons who should kill a slave to be guilty of homicide; and he ordered that if any slave, when sick, was sent to the island of Esculapius, he should be set at liberty on his recovery. No stranger was permitted to take or use the name of a Roman Family.

THE government of Achaia and Macedonia, which Tiberius had assumed, were now restored to the senate. The Lycians, on the contrary, were deprived of their liberty for their civil discords; and the Rhodians, who had formerly offended, repenting of their crimes, were received into favour. The Trojans, as authors of the Roman people, were honoured with peculiar marks of distinction, and their tribute was remitted to them for ever.

ABOUT this time the German ambassadors were permitted to sit in the orchestra of the theatre, with those of the Parthians and Armenians. He abolished entirely the religion of the Druids, on account of its cruelty, from which Augustus had heretofore restrained the Roman citizens; but he brought to Rome the Eleusinian sacrifices of Attica, and repaired the Temple of Venus Erycina in Sicily, by public contribution, which was become ruinous from old age. Yet in all his concerns he was led more by the fancy and caprice of his wives, and the people who surrounded him, than by his own will and disposition.

THE nation of Thrace, which had formerly been subject to kings, was reduced in his time to a Roman province; and, in consequence of the prosecution of the war in Britain, Caractacus, their king, was defeated, taken prisoner, and brought to Rome.

IT will interest our readers, to be more particular in describing the progress of the Roman arms in Britain, after the departure of Claudius. Plautius and his lieutenant Vespasian, after fighting thirty battles with the enemy, reduced part of the island into the form of a Roman province. The successor of Plautius met with opposition from them, and Ostorius was compelled to use violence and force; but they were at last overcome, after a powerful resistance, in which the inhabitants of South Wales were the most formidable opponents which the Roman  
generals



generals had ever encountered. By removing the seat of war into the more inaccessible parts of the country, he kept the Romans for nine years in continual alarm ; but a decisive battle at last became necessary, and Caractacus, their king, addressed his people with a calm resolution, and informed them that their liberty or slavery depended upon the issue of it. But Roman discipline prevailed, after an obstinate contest, over confused valour, and the Britons were entirely routed, and his wife and daughter taken prisoners ; and the queen of the Brigantes, to whom he had fled for refuge, treacherously gave him up to the conquerors.

His dignity and courage never failed him, though his condition was so greatly humbled. As he was conducted through the streets of Rome, he remarked the splendor of every object around him ; and pertinently observed, with surprize, “ how such a people, possessed of such astonishing magnificence at home, could possibly think of envying Caractacus his humble cottage in Britain.” His conduct before the emperor was manly and intrepid ; having no objection to accept of pardon, but disdaining meanly to solicit it. “ If I had submitted,” says he, “ tamely to your power, it would have destroyed your glory, and my fortune would have been no way memorable. If now, then, you spare my life, I shall be a lasting example of your clemency.” This noble declaration induced Claudius generously to pardon him ; a triumph also was decreed for Ostorius, but he did not live to enjoy it.

At the conclusion of eight centuries from the building of the city of Rome, Claudius orders the celebration of the famous secular games, to solemnize the birth-day of the city. Of all the games amongst the Romans, these were the most solemn and magnificent, and, in the regular order, were only exhibited once in a hundred years. Augustus had, indeed, displayed them about sixty four years before ; but that was out of the usual course. To these were all persons solemnly invited by an herald, “ to be spectators of such shews as they never before had seen, or ever again should see.” They were attended with all imaginable pomp and splendor, and every kind of martial and cruel exercises ; the greatest variety of religious rites and Pagan superstitions, a sufficient instance of the prevalent idolatry of the times, was also displayed.

TIBERIUS ALEXANDER, the governor of Palestine, who had been sent to supersede Fadus, was soon after this spectacle recalled from thence, after about two years continuance ; in whose stead was sent Cumanus, who joined the Samaritans, at enmity with the Galileans, and instead of redressing them against their oppressors,



oppressors, fell upon them with his standing troops, killed many, and took many prisoners. Quadratus, governor of Syria, was also made a party, and completed what Cumanus had begun, by crucifying all his prisoners. But he afterwards understood that the Galileans had only been roused to resist oppression, that the Samaritans were the aggressors, and that Cumanus had been corrupted; upon which he first commands eighteen of the principal of the Samaritans to be beheaded, and then ordered the high priest, with Cumanus the governor, and a tribune, to go immediately to Rome, and answer to the emperor to all charges which should be brought against them. Agrippa, who was now at Rome, and had so successfully pleaded the cause of his countrymen on a former occasion, had influence to induce the emperor to do justice: on which the tribune and many of the Samaritans were executed, and Cumanus deprived of his government, and sent into banishment. Felix, who succeeded him in the government, was notorious for all sorts of vices and corruptions.

CLAUDIUS was a man, who had been very unfortunate in his marriages. When he was very young, he had espoused the Granddaughter of Augustus, whom he divorced before the marriage was consummated, because that her father and mother had offended the emperor. He next contracted to be married to Livia Medullina, who was of the ancient family of the dictator Camillus; but she died on the very day appointed for the nuptials. In the next place, he married Plautina Urgulanilla, whose father had had a triumph, whom he divorced for unchastity, and on a suspicion of her entertaining some design upon his life. He afterwards married Elia Petina, the daughter of a consul, whom he also divorced for very slight reasons. Valeria Messalina, the daughter of Barbatus Messala, his cousin, was the next whom he took to the honour of being empress; but she was a woman of the most infamous practices, which produced infinite mischiefs in the state. As she became more public in her lewdness, in which she was impudent to excess, and triumphant in her adulterous designs, she sacrificed many of her gallants, who were not sufficiently serviceable for her boundless desires. Caius Silius, the most beautiful youth in the city of Rome, was the object of her passion, whom she compelled, though reluctantly, to divorce his lady, that she might be free from rivals. Her infamous conduct may be inferred from this, that they were openly married soon after, almost in the emperor's presence: as she fully relied on his stupid blindness, and the powerful influence which she had over him. But Claudius was roused by his favourites;



favourites; and he assumed sufficient resolution to denounce death upon her and her confederates.

NOTWITHSTANDING he was freed from a dangerous and infamous wife, he once more gave way to a licentious passion, and became enamoured of his own niece Agrippina. Her amazing spirit and boundless ambition, never ceased to exercise themselves until she had induced Claudius to prefer Nero, her son, by a former marriage, to his own son Britannicus, then a minor, whom he had by Messalina. Her daughter Octavia was married also to Nero, though she had been contracted to Silanus; which proved fatal to the youth, as the contraction also of Pompey to the daughter of Petina occasioned his being murdered.

AGRIPPINA was unboundedly desirous for Nero's succeeding in the empire. It was told her by some oracle, "That her son should be emperor, but that he would be the cause of her death;" to which she answered in these words, "Let him, if he does but reign." But Claudius was not so extremely insensible, not to be sorry for his marriage with her, and the adoption of her son Nero; which Agrippina soon discovered by the unusual favours bestowed on Britannicus, and by his accidentally saying, when he was elevated with wine, "That he had ever been unfortunate in his wives, but that none of them had ever escaped unpunished." Upon this she formed the resolution to poison him, but deliberated on the kind of poison she should use; as a strong one might render her villainy too manifest, and a slow one would give him an opportunity of discovering her practices, and disappoint the succession of her son. She therefore chose a potion which distracted his senses, and would not too suddenly put a period to his life. By her artifices she prevented the too early knowledge of his death, till her son Nero had prepared and secured every thing necessary for his succession to the empire. He died on the 13th day of October, in the year of Christ, by the common account, 54, and in the 64th year of his age, after a reign of 13 years, 8 months, and 19 days.

PATERCULUS, the Roman historian, and Pomponius Melæ, were the only persons of eminence, during the reign of Claudius, whose names are handed down to posterity. It is scarcely possible, indeed, to suppose, that any countenance should be afforded to science and literature, by a man of so stupid and besotted a disposition. As Claudius, after his flimsy expedition to Britain, had left his lieutenants to conduct the war; the latter of the historians, just mentioned, who wrote upon the affairs of the Britains, expresses a hope that



by the success of the Roman arms, the island, with its savage inhabitants, would soon be better known.

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C H A P. XXVIII.

NERO, *the Fifth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 806. A.D. 54.]

**B**Y the management of Burrhus, who was præfect of the Pretorian guards, and one of the governors to young Nero, the palace gates were suddenly thrown open. Though some enquiries were made after Britannicus, then in the 14th year of his age, on their joining the guards which were then on duty, Nero was received with the loudest acclamations; and he was immediately carried from thence in a chariot to the rest of the troops. On his promising them a considerable bounty, he was immediately saluted emperor, and shortly after confirmed by the senate. He was also acknowledged by the provinces without opposition.

BEING at this time only seventeen years of age, his reign commenced in the most flattering way, and his government was applauded by all ranks of people. The joy and satisfaction of the city were general; for he manifested his utmost endeavours apparently to serve the public. It was understood, that, by his just, liberal, and merciful conduct, which were obvious both in his words and actions, he would accomplish his promise of governing by the wise rules and prudent institutions of Augustus. From his mode of conferring favours, assigning pensions to decayed senators, and treating all men courteously and with the utmost humanity; there seemed to be little cause for apprehending those miseries, which afterwards succeeded. He likewise divided money to the citizens, and moderated the taxes and other impositions. His clemency and pity towards unfortunate convicts, whom the laws of their country had sentenced to death, were conspicuous; and the first death-warrant which he signed, was accompanied with this humane declaration—"Would to Heaven that I had never learned to write." His modesty towards the senate was  
equally



equally manifest, from his reply to their applauses of his mild and just government;—to “defer their thanks till he had done something to deserve them.”

MUCH of this conduct is, indeed, to be attributed to the wisdom of his governors; one of whom, as we have already mentioned, was Burrhus, a man eminent for his military discipline and gravity of manners. The renowned Seneca was the other, whose excellence in precepts of eloquence and courteous demeanour, are universally known and admired.

ONE of the first acts of his cruelty was exercised against the young Britannicus, the son of Claudius, whom he caused to be poisoned, about a year and four months after his advancement to the empire. This might probably be a scheme of policy, to prevent him from becoming a troublesome claimant at some future opportunity, at the instigation of some disaffected person. It may, perhaps, be proper to conclude, that this *alone* is not a sufficient criterion to judge of his future disposition; which more particularly began to display itself, in the several steps he took for effecting the death of his mother.

His change of disposition towards Agrippina, by whose management alone he had obtained the imperial dignity, and towards whom the ties of filial duty ought to have engaged the most sacred obedience, was occasioned by the restraint he felt himself under, through her presence, in the pursuit of his enormities. After various means had been tried, without effect, to occasion her death secretly, and in a way which might pass for a natural death, he caused it to be proclaimed publicly, that she had conspired against his life. To render this rumour the more plausible, a person was apparently detected in the act of dropping a dagger at his feet; who declared immediately, that he had received orders from Agrippina to dispatch him at an early opportunity. Upon this, he gave directions, without delay, to certain tribunes to murder her, which was speedily effected. But the horror of the fact constantly pursued him; and his imagination ever after was haunted and disturbed with the most terrifying ideas. He confessed frequently, “that the apprehensions of his mother’s ghost often disturbed him, and that he was tormented by “infernal furies,” and stung with a consciousness of so atrocious an act.

He had some time before taken Poppæa Sabina from the bed of her husband Otho, and, after bringing her to court, caused her to be received as empress of the Roman dominions; a situation which she held about eight years, when the emperor, offended with the liberty she took in upbraiding him



as he returned late from driving his chariot in public, gave her a kick with his foot, which terminated her life. At this time she was with child, and also much indisposed; which are circumstances of the highest aggravation of his conduct, and proofs of his extreme depravity and degeneracy.

ABOUT the time that Poppæa was made empress of Rome, the country of Armenia was wholly subdued, and came under the dominion of the Roman government. Some time after he appointed the celebration of new games, which were to be repeated for five years; and Festus was appointed to the tributary government of Judæa, in the room of Felix, who was now removed, after he had been governor more than seven years. In this period he had greatly oppressed the people of the Jews; and his conduct, together with the degeneracy and corruptions of the inhabitants, caused frequent ravages, seditions, and bloodsheds. Being accused of misconduct in his administration, a severe punishment would certainly have followed it, if his brother Pallas, at that time in the highest favour with the emperor, had not interceded. Festus continued in the government of Judæa until his death, which happened about two years after; to whom Albinus succeeded, who remained in that dignity little more than two years, and was superseded by Gessius Florus, through the interest of the empress Poppæa.

THOUGH Albinus had greatly harassed the Jews, and oppressed them in a very wicked and arbitrary manner; yet no sooner was Florus established in his government, than he manifested the utmost extension of rapacity and tyranny. His acts of violence were bold and daring, and he publicly gloried in his greatest exactions and enormities. He omitted no rapines nor extortions, by which the people might be afflicted, and himself benefited. All intreaties were vain and useless; and his plunders were exercised every where, even to the desolating and pillaging whole cities and provinces. Public robberies were even patronised and encouraged, on condition that he only shared in the booty; and great numbers were obliged to abandon their habitations, and flee to foreign countries, to escape the effects of so much oppression.

BRITAIN was an object of conquest and dominion in the reign of this emperor, as well as of his predecessor Claudius. The conquering Caractacus did not put an end to the wars in that island; which were carried on with much persevering obstinacy and resolution, and cost the Romans much blood and treasure. It is said that more than eighty thousand Romans perished in the contest, before the Britons were reduced in  
any



any tolerable degree to the obedience of the Roman Government.

Soon after this conquest, one of the governors of the emperor, Burrhus, of whom we have spoken already, paid the great debt of nature; and Seneca, whose lessons of instruction were no longer agreeable to the profligate Nero, wished to retire from the scenes of public life to a more desirable station. It was strongly suspected, that the agents of Nero had been concerned in the death of Burrhus, by means of poison; and as Seneca's interest and authority were so much weakened, he prudently desired permission to withdraw himself, at the same time offering to surrender his large estate, which had been the occasion of so much envy. Amongst the emperor's numerous vices, that of dissimulation was not the least obvious; and he refused this modest request, under a shew of affection and respect. The philosopher laid aside those external appearances of rank and dignity, which he had formerly displayed, lived a life of obscurity and humility, received but few visits, and whenever he publicly appeared, his retinue was extremely small.

When Nero dispossessed Otho of his partner, and raised Poppæa to the imperial throne, he divorced Octavia the daughter of Claudius; and afterwards, when the Roman people murmured at this injury, he first banished and then caused her to be put to death. Some time after this, a conspiracy was formed against him, at the head of which was Piso, a man of great power and integrity, who, as well as many others, of all ranks and degrees, suffered the punishment of such a conduct. Lucan, Seneca, and a great many others, both noble and ignoble, guilty and innocent, were involved and included in the general calamity. It was sufficient cause of the condemnation of Lucan, that he excelled in the art of poetry, to which Nero himself made some pretences; on this account, vainly comparing his own verses to those of this famous poet, he had forbid him to publish his verses, and a mortal hatred subsisted between them. The falsity of the emperor's pretended respect for Seneca was now demonstrated, whom he condemned also to death; which sentence this great man received with composure and even cheerfulness, and only desired permission to bestow a few legacies, which was denied him. His speech to his weeping friends is too magnanimous to be passed over, "That since he had been hindered from giving them what they had merited, he left them the example of his life, the memory and imitation of which would gain them immortal honour among all good men." His abstinence had been so great, that he could not bleed, and poison



would have no effect upon him, though he sought death by various ways; at last he was stifled by the fumes of a bath, after discoursing on many excellent precepts of morality, with his usual elegance, for the good of his fellow citizens. The polite Petronius, though a most refined son of pleasure, and therefore a counterpart to Seneca in his life and sentiments, who had also very greatly assisted Nero in his extravagant sensuality, and was noted for his exquisite knowledge in the refinements of voluptuousness, suffered also in this general destruction. But in the calmness and serenity with which he met death, he very much resembled Seneca; he seemed to play with death, as if he had no trouble or concern about it, opening his veins and closing them with the utmost composure and discoursing with his friends on such pleasant subjects, as he had been accustomed to during his life.

THE conduct of Nero, before the commission of such horrid crimes as totally supersede human nature, had been more like that of a madman than the governor of a great people. After committing the most abominable excesses, and debasing himself by the most extravagant follies, so that invention was entirely exhausted and staggered; he conceived the project of destroying the city, on account of the narrowness of the streets and irregularity of the buildings. The ambition of founding a new city immediately possessed his mind, and he caused Rome to be set on fire in several places at once, that he might enjoy the prospect of such a lamentable desolation. It continued more than six days, in which great numbers of people perished, and three fourths of the city was laid in ashes, before it terminated.

FOR such an execrable and diabolical act, the author of which was generally known, the emperor had the greatest reason to dread the rage and resentment of an injured people; and he was struck with remorse at the horrid proceeding. Accordingly he set himself, with the utmost expedition, to rebuild the city, and exerted every means which human policy could invent, to appease the minds of the citizens. He bestowed large gifts on the lower classes of the people; and the books of the Sybils were also consulted, with a view to appease the incensed gods. Yet were all the gifts, ceremonies, and sacrifices scarcely sufficient to secure the emperor's reputation, or to remove the strongest suspicions that he was the author of this calamitous tragedy. Unfortunately for the disciples of Christianity, the emperor diverted the attention of the people from himself, by issuing a cruel and severe edict against them, pretending that they were the authors of the conflagration. In restoring the city, he caused a stately palace to  
be



be built, which should be worthy of being the residence of the monarchs of the world.

WE have noticed already, that the country of Armenia was wholly subdued under this emperor; whose king, Tiridates, afterwards received his crown from Nero. After this the temple of Janus was shut for a short time, as the signal of universal peace, which had not been shut since the second year after our Saviour's nativity. When this had been effected, Nero left Rome with an astonishing retinue, and passed into Greece and Achaia; and there indulged himself more than a year in the exercise of all kinds of games and extravagances. In his absence he committed the government of the city to Helius, who was one of his wicked instruments and bloody executioners in his horrid massacres; from whose power and authority, which were absolute and unlimited, the inhabitants were very severely afflicted.

THE short interval of peace was soon terminated by the rebellion of the Jews, whose oppressions and hardships, under the government of Florus, were become intolerable. Various endeavours were used by the more prudent and peaceable among the Jews, to prevent the increase of disaffection, and to atone for some imprudent and impolitic measures which the inferior Jews had taken; but it so happened, through the direction of providence, that they were not productive of that success, which they were so well calculated and adapted to produce. For the Jews, who had filled up the portion of their iniquity were nearly ripe for that destruction, which their conduct had so much deserved; their impending fate approached with rapid strides, and every thing concurred to accomplish it.

THERE cannot be a more demonstrative proof of the cruelty and savage temper, which distinguished Nero, than the following. Unhappy in himself, it was sufficient to excite his envy and indignation, if he found that others were more contented. The conjugal felicity of Pætus and Arria were proverbial; nor was any other pretence necessary to hasten their dissolution, as this profligate emperor could not endure that any person in his empire should presume to think themselves happy when he himself was not so. His letter on the occasion was remarkable. "Pætus, you are hereby com-  
 " manded to dispatch yourself. I have heard a very good  
 " character of you, and therefore leave to your own choice,  
 " whether you will die by dagger, sword, or poison. If you  
 " survive this order above an hour, I have given directions  
 " that you shall be put to death by the most excruciating tor-  
 " tures." The dreadful message was received by Arria,



whose distraction and rage may be more easily conceived than described. But the tyrant's commands were irresistible, and she resolved not to survive her husband; and as she delivered him the letter, on his arrival, she stabbed herself with a poignard so effectually, that she had only time to say, "Pætus, it is not painful." He followed the heroic example without hesitation.

IN the general persecution, which commenced, in consequence of the emperor's edict, after the burning of the city, the two great apostles of the Christians perished; the wicked governor Helius, during his absence in Greece, was of too savage a disposition to suffer any relaxation in its execution.

WHEN Nero returned to Rome, at the request of Helius, on account of disturbances which were rising at home, he was surrounded with players and musicians in a kind of triumph. But the misconduct of such a succession of emperors, who had put the minds of the people into a ferment, was no longer supportable, and the furious effects were soon manifested. The dissimulation of Tiberius had excited their jealousy, and the brutality of Caligula had created an aversion; the stupidity of Claudius had produced disgust, but the mad fury of Nero was beyond all precedent, and totally exhausted their little remains of patience. The necessity of a revolution was therefore pressing, and every one seemed to concur in the steps which tended to produce it. Accordingly Vindex, who commanded the legions in Gaul, began the revolt, by protesting publicly against the government of Nero; who invited Sergius Galba, at that time governor of part of Spain, whose reputation was extremely memorable, to assume the imperial authority, and to march with an army towards Rome. From the moment that the tyrant received this intelligence, he considered himself as undone; for the armies every where declared against the present emperor. Rage and despair were now manifested in the fullest manner. He resolved to sacrifice all the governors of provinces, as a terror to restrain them within the bounds of their duty; the commanders of the armies were also destined to the same fate; all exiled persons were immediately to be destroyed; all the Gauls which were in Rome he had consigned to butchery; whose nation was to be given up to the plunder of his army. He also designed to have poisoned the whole senate at an entertainment; to burn the city which had so lately felt the ravages of fire; and to turn out among the people a variety of wild beasts, so as to prevent the most vigorous and active from extinguishing the flames.

THE career of so much wickedness was, however, near its period. The measure of his iniquity was now summed up, and



and his infernal disposition had no longer the means of executing its purposes. Every one forsook him, and joined the standard of the revolt. His servility and timidity were now as conspicuous, as before his conduct had been haughty and tyrannical; and he who was so lately the greatest monarch in the world, was now reduced to a more deplorable and wretched state than the vilest slave. The senate, who at this time were assembled, pronounced him a mortal enemy to the state; and solemnly condemned him to die “after the manner of his ancestors,” by having his head made fast in a pillory, there to be scourged to death.

It was now time for Nero to think of escaping by any means which offered. He sounded the tribunes and captains of his guards, with a view to engage their accompanying him in his flight; but some of them pretended the greatest difficulties, and others openly refused his request. At one time he had thoughts of fleeing to the Parthians, or to Galba, as a suppliant; at other times to appear in black, and endeavour to excite the compassion of the people, by supplicating a pardon for what was past. In despair, he sent for Spicillus, or some other gladiator, to put a period to his existence by the sword; and when no person could be found to render him this last service, “What,” says he, “have I neither friend nor enemy?”—on which he began to run as if he designed to throw himself into the Tiber.

He resolved, however, to seek some place of concealment, till he should have time to recover his spirits. One of his freemen, whose name was Phaon, offered him a retreat at his country house, about four miles from Rome. To this place he set out without cloathing, and only in his shirt, with an old cloak wrapped round him; and having put an handkerchief before his face, he mounted on horseback, accompanied only by four persons, one of which was Sporus, a youth whom he had caused to be emasculated, and dressed up in the habit of an empress, and had as such attended him in the most public places.

THE lightnings and earthquakes, which accompanied him on the way, were sufficient to alarm a mind less timorous or less superstitious. As he passed by the camp, the imprecations of the soldiers against himself were distinctly heard, with the most extravagant effusions of their desires and wishes for the success and prosperity of Galba. Some whom they met in this march, considered them as persons who were pursuing Nero; and others enquired of him, “What news was there at Rome respecting Nero?” At this time, his horse started at a body which had been thrown in the way, and in succour-



ing the animal his face was uncovered, and an old soldier of the guards perceived and recollected him. They were obliged to quit their horses at a short turn of some bushes, and Nero, in pursuing a difficult path amongst some reeds, had great labour to climb a wall which was opposite the house. Here he was advised by Phaon to conceal himself in a cavern, till it became somewhat dark, who declared “that he would not be “buried alive;” but having a desire to drink, he took up some water from a ditch with his hand. He crept on all fours towards the house, to prevent his being discovered; and as soon as he was got into a chamber he threw himself upon a bed, where he had but an indifferent pillow and an old blanket. When he was pressed with the appetites of hunger and thirst, they presented him with coarse bread which he would not eat; but contented himself with drinking a little lukewarm water.

EVERY one who was now about him, desired him to prevent speedily the evils and affronts with which he was threatened, insomuch that they made, in his presence, a ditch of the size of his body, and sent hastily for some pieces of marble, if they could procure any, and also for wood and water to wash and burn his body. He wept at every word, and exclaimed suddenly, many times, “Is it necessary that so good an instrument player should die!” When a courier of Phaon’s brought dispatches, which acquainted him that he was declared by the senate an enemy of the republic, and that they sought to punish him according to ancient custom; on his being informed what that custom was, he seized two poignards, and feeling the point of both of them, again secured them, saying, that his fatal hour was not yet come. Whilst he was hesitating, at one time blaming himself for want of courage, and at another calling for some friend to set him an example of death, a noise of persons on horseback approached, with orders to seize him alive and carry him to Rome, of which he was himself fully sensible; but he was even now in so weak a state of body and mind, that he had need of the assistance of Epaphroditus, his master of requests, to enable him to strike the dagger into his throat. As he was expiring, his pursuers entered the room, who attempted to stanch the blood, but in vain. His dying wish, that his body might be burned entire, was permitted; and his ashes were deposited in the tomb of the Domitians, who were his ancestors. His funeral was very costly and expensive; in whom died the family of the Cæsars, who reigned in Rome, though the following emperors retained the title.

SUCH was the fate of an emperor, who seemed to have been born for the scourge of mankind. He was the first who  
publicly



publicly proclaimed his enmity to the Christians, under whom some of their greatest defenders fell a sacrifice to tyranny and persecution. By his execrable actions he brought upon himself the severest misfortunes which could befall a prince; which were productive of as heavy calamities as could be brought upon a state, and of the greatest internal convulsions after his decease. After a reign of 13 years, 7 months, and 27 days, he was reduced to this necessity of terminating his existence, in the 32d year of his age.

We have already mentioned Seneca and Petronius, as eminent in literature during the reign of Nero, though in a very different way. Lucan, as a poet, in this dangerous age, in like manner attained to such a degree of eminence, as handed his name to posterity; through whose hands we have received the knowledge of his performances. Quintus Curtius, too, an historian of some note amongst his own people, appeared conspicuously during his reign.

Of his person we have an account, though not the most flattering, yet sufficiently agreeable. Notwithstanding his excesses, he was only sick three times during his reign, and that so slightly, that it did not compel him to the least abstinence. In his dress he was rather indifferent and careless than the contrary. And to speak of his education, the liberal sciences were principally attended to; but his mother totally prevented his instruction in the fundamentals of philosophy, as beneath the consideration of a sovereign prince. He despised and ridiculed every thing which had the appearance of religion; yet, such was the inconsistency of a mind, absorbed in pleasures, in debaucheries, and in the most consummate scenes of wickedness, that he at last was compelled, by the force of reflection, to consult the auguries of the times, to discover something propitious to his fortune, when his own heart and the depravity of his life condemned him.

## C H A P. XXIX.

GALBA, *the Sixth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 820. A. D. 68.]

THE imperial dignity, though it commenced with the death of Nero, in the month of June, when he was declared



clared emperor, had been in some degree conferred upon Galba above two months before, the power of which he had assumed in Spain. He had no alliance whatever with the family of the Cæsars, either by affinity of blood or by adoption; but the empire was given to him by the soldiers, and the senate immediately consented to their choice. In the ruin of Nero the whole empire was involved, and difficulties occurred, and disturbances arose in every place, which Galba, in his march from Spain, every where subdued and suppressed. By granting liberty to certain slaves, and inviting the populace to join him in defence of themselves and families against the cruelties and oppressions of the tyrant, he prevailed with the greater part of the people to support him. On his coming to Rome, after Nero's death, he gave many specimens of severity and avarice, and exercised his authority with no sparing hand. Many of those whom Nero had elevated from the lowest condition, he caused to be reduced; by which, indeed, as well as by his rescinding many other odious acts of Nero, and by executing many of the wicked instruments of his cruelty, but particularly Helius, his abandoned substitute, he gave much satisfaction. But some of the most notorious offenders were spared for the sake of money; for his avarice was so extreme, that he would frequently sigh and weep when his table was better served than usual. As this was a vice of age, it was far from unnatural, however absurd; but it was peculiarly dangerous to the prosperity and success of his empire, when the depravity and licentiousness of the Prætorian soldiers is considered, to whom a large donative had been promised in his absence. This he utterly refused to allow, though it was customary on their swearing allegiance to a new emperor; and he declared "that he chose and would never purchase his soldiers," which was highly offensive to the army in those corrupt times, who could not submit to any discipline like that of the ancient Romans. They well knew that he suffered himself to be bought and sold every day; and they hated and detested him, as well as on this account, so also on account of his giving himself entirely to the management of three favourites.

TITUS VINIUS, who was one of these pedagogues, as they were satirically named, had been a lieutenant in Spain, and was a man of insatiable covetousness. Cornelius Lacon had been raised to the honour of colonel of the guards from a low station, and had rendered himself insupportable by his haughtiness and brutality. Icelus was a freeman, whom the emperor had honoured with the privilege of wearing a gold ring, and to whom he had given the surname of Marcian; who aspired  
to



to the order of Roman knights. These three persons, whose vices were so very different from each other, insufferably abused the authority of the emperor, and occasioned his conduct to appear extremely opposite and irregular; at one time seeming to be severe and frugal, and at another remiss and prodigal; sometimes condemning the most illustrious persons, at their instigation, without permitting them the means of defence, at other times suffering the most guilty and iniquitous offenders to escape. He was very frugal of bestowing the rights of a Roman citizen; and he made some regulations amongst the judges, which had no very agreeable reception. It was apprehended that he meant to limit the duration of the rank of a knight, and the office of a senator, to two years; and not to give it to persons who were desirous of it, but to force it upon others who wished to decline the honour.

THE most presuming politician could scarcely expect that, in such unsettled times, a man who had incurred the displeasure and hatred of the army, had little foundation to expect a long reign, had he been much younger than the present emperor. Not only the Prætorian soldiers were offended with him, but the army in Germany murmured still more, who were the first who dared to make a stand against his authority; for on being required on the first day of the year to take the oath, they immediately sent an embassy to the Prætorians to declare, "That they would not admit an emperor who was made in Spain, and that another should be raised to that dignity, who should be approved by all the armies."

As soon as Galba had received the intelligence of these dissatisfactions, he considered that his age might be one great objection to their approbation, and his want of an heir to succeed him in the empire, might be a means of lessening their sense of duty to him. Upon this he resolved immediately to adopt an heir; but with such a regard, at the same time, for the public good, that he rejected the application of Otho, notwithstanding the good services he had received from him, as the first person of note who joined him on his declaring against Nero. His favourites also, on this occasion, greatly interested themselves; and each of them was emulous to nominate an heir to the empire, and consequently to augment his influence in matters of government. Much contention was, therefore, manifested on this interesting subject. But Galba gave the preference to Piso Licinianus, and, according to the general account of historians, he deserved commendation for the choice which he made. The army and the senate approved of his choice; but they did it in so cool and reluctant a way, that he could not hope for much for his designed successor.



THE account which historians have given us of Piso, is the strongest testimony in favour of Galba's discernment upon this occasion. His merit was the only consideration which induced the emperor to give him the preference of all other competitors; and took pains to instruct him in such a manner as might have been extremely serviceable to him, had he succeeded to the empire. His modesty, firmness, and equality of temper were such, as demonstrated his merit; in which he shewed himself more capable of discharging than ambitious of obtaining his present dignity. But the army and the senate, who had long shook off all kind of disinterestedness, and accustomed themselves to bribery and corruption, were not disposed to endure any emperor who could not, or would not, satisfy their avarice. In a nation of such universal depravity, it was in vain to expect the reward of virtue.

OTHO, on the contrary, who was very desirous of obtaining the honour, which was to ensure him the reversion of the empire, had effectually secured the interest of Galba's chief favourite, Vinus; and had also engaged the favour of the Urban and Prætorian cohorts, that he could form little doubt of success. It was certainly matter of much regret, that Galba, whose wish was solely to promote the public good, should be so extremely unfortunate in the success of such laudable endeavours; for the very acts of the emperor, which had apparently the best tendency to perpetuate his government, were productive of the utmost confusion, and terminated in his utter ruin. When Otho discovered the firm determination of Galba to frustrate his sanguine wishes, he lost no time in his application to the soldiers, whose interest he had previously engaged. He now prevailed upon them, by many plausible harangues and a variety of promises (to which Galba had unhappily been blind, in neglecting, and even refusing to perform and complete the engagements of his friends) to proclaim him emperor of Rome, in opposition to Galba. This they agreed to unanimously, and, with drawn swords, to manifest a resolution of effecting their designs, conveyed him to their camp, near the city gates. Such an unexpected circumstance disheartened Galba, and to the greatest degree perplexed and confounded every one about him. Various were the sentiments which prevailed on this sudden commotion; for whilst some were decidedly of opinion that he should immediately have recourse to arms, and appear in public, others declared that he ought to secure himself in the capitol, and there attend the result of the confusion. But he was undetermined which course to take; and, by means of an artful and deceitful rumour, which was propagated assiduously, that Otho was  
slain,



gain, he was at last induced to ride out of the palace, with an armed guard, and a number of followers, into the forum.

THE report having thus produced the effect for which it was declared, was speedily followed by a powerful body of horse from the camp, as soon as it was known that Galba was in motion. They entered on the opposite side of the forum very soon after this advance of the emperor. Firmly resolved, as they were, of dispatching him, his presence, on their nearer approach, struck them with awe, and for some time they stood amazed, doubtful of the success of their mission, and apprehensive for the consequences of their fatal errand. But Galba discovered the most obvious tokens of fear and irresolution; being uncertain, in so critical a juncture, (which bore very little demonstration of the experienced general) what course to take. Whilst he was thus debating in his mind, surrounded by a great multitude of his faithful subjects, the chief of his followers suddenly abandoned him; upon which the soldiers, which had been sent by Otho for that purpose, rushed in amongst the people, and dispersed and trampled them under foot. Plutarch informs us, that, on their approaching the emperor, he bid them, on stretching out his neck towards them, to “strike it off, if it were for the good of the commonwealth and the Roman people;” and, as Suetonius relates, desiring them to “strike boldly, if it was their pleasure” to dispatch him.

AMONGST those who fell, upon this occasion, his three favourites did not escape their deserved punishment; who had, by their selfish proceedings, occasioned so much disorder and bloodshed. Even Vinius, the creature of Otho, was not spared on this occasion. And it is somewhat remarkable, that none of those who were present had the fortitude and resolution to succour the emperor; nor did any of the soldiers discover the least inclination to support him, except we should notice, which ought not to be forgotten, the loyalty and integrity of a company of Germans, in gratitude for his care of them when they were sick and harassed to an extreme. But as they knew not where to find him, they could not arrive in sufficient time to relieve him from his perilous situation. His head was immediately raised upon the point of a lance, and presented to Otho; by whom it was ordered to be carried contemptuously round the camp, whilst his body remained unburied in the streets. At length it was interred by one of his slaves.

THE design of sacrificing Galba had been entertained by Otho from the moment of his giving the preference to Piso; and his resentment had planned an immediate execution of it, which,



which, upon mature consideration, was postponed to a more favourable season. He began by corrupting a number of the archers, who secured as many as they thought necessary, by giving them a small sum of money each, and promising a much greater sum afterwards; to effect which, and to enable him to accomplish the other purposes of the enterprize, he had lately possessed himself of ten thousand grand festerces, which was the reward of his recommending to Galba a slave to be master of his household. To this seasonable aid the success of his enterprize was in a good measure to be attributed.

Thus fell Galba, after a short reign of seven months, in the 73d year of his age. He possessed many virtues; but the vices of his favourites, after he came to the empire, hastened his destruction, who were themselves involved in the general calamity.

## C H A P. XXX.

### Otho, the Seventh ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 821. A. D. 69.]

BESIDES the ambition which stimulated Otho to the steps he had taken, he was encumbered with such a heavy load of debt, which had been contracted by an expensive and riotous mode of life, that his only resource was now presented for delivering himself from so great a burden. Accordingly he resolved to obtain the empire at any rate, since he had pushed forward as a competitor for the adoption; and finding it unattainable, in a peaceable way, he had now employed force to effect his design.

His affairs, therefore, were desperate, and he frankly confessed, “that he could not subsist unless he was elected sovereign; and it was indifferent to him, whether he fell by the hands of his enemies in defending himself in the chief command, or suffered by the legal proceedings of his creditors.”

GALBA was no sooner dead, than Otho was declared his successor in the empire. He was of an ancient family, and in  
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the prime of life, being now about 38 years of age. As the Prætorian soldiers had the principal concern in his advancement to this honour, this precedent encouraged them to exercise it frequently, afterwards, to the great disadvantage and prejudice of the Roman people; which too commonly proved fatal also to the emperors themselves, who were so appointed, from the numerous jealousies and occasions of envy which it produced.

CONTRARY to the opinion and expectation of many, Otho began his reign with the suspension of many pleasures, to which he had heretofore been addicted; dissembling his riotous and luxurious life, and ordering all things in a manner which tended to augment the prosperity, and promote the honour and dignity of the empire. He punished, with the strictest regard to justice, the chief instrument of Nero's impurity, whose name was Tigellinus; but restored at the same time many exiles, and performed many other generous acts which procured him the most pleasing esteem and affection of the Roman citizens. A signal instance of his clemency was manifested in the pardon of Marius Celsus, whom Galba had highly favoured with his attention; and not only assured him of forgiveness, but raised him to the highest honours, an action which he justified by the assertion, that "Fidelity deserved every reward."

BUT whilst he so successfully managed matters in the city, the rest of the empire was far from being in so tranquil a state. Vitellius, who commanded the legions in the lower Germany, many days before the death of Galba, had engaged his army, by munificent donations and large promises, to declare him emperor, without waiting for the consent or approbation of the senate. They maintained, and with much appearance of reason, that they had an equal right to appoint a person to that high station as the cohorts of Rome; and an army of seventy thousand men was no inconsiderable or contemptible force to support a resolution, which must impress them individually with a spirit of enthusiasm.

WHEN it was known at Rome, that Vitellius had put this formidable body in motion, with a view to maintain his pretensions to the empire, and that his generals, Valens and Cecinna, were approaching towards Rome with the principal part of the army, whilst Vitellius was in Gaul, in order to bring forward the rest of the forces; the city of Rome, with Otho at their head, were suddenly seized with consternation at an event so unexpected. Both parties had strong pretensions to public support; and much bloodshed was to be apprehended as the consequence of such an opposition.

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THE great preparations of Otho, and the inability of the Roman nobility and gentry, to take the field from continued scenes of luxury and effeminacy, gave the greater cause of alarm to the city. The heads of the senate were also now become old and impotent, and had lost both the power and the vigour of soldiers. The nobility, on account of a long peace, were enervated and slothful, and totally unqualified to submit to the fatigues of a camp. The equites were dissolved in ease and luxury, and entirely ignorant of all military service; and the more they studied and endeavoured to conceal their inexperience, the more they inadvertently betrayed their fears. About this time, indeed, the whole world, as it was then called, began to be in a state of commotion and perturbation.

As soon as Otho was fully informed of the near approach of Vitellius's generals, he departed from Rome with an army, respectable for its number; and left Flavius Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian, who still continued in Judæa with his army, which had sworn fidelity both to Galba and Otho, to govern the city of Rome in his absence. When the two armies came near to each other, a most unhappy and fatal civil war commenced, from which the Roman state had been free near an hundred years. Both parties were anxious for effecting a decision, and much animosity and precipitation were manifested. Many skirmishes and other encounters speedily took place within a few days; there were also fought three considerable battles in a short space of time, at Placentia, Cremona, and at Castor. On all these occasions the advantage was favourable to Otho and the senate.

BUT as Valens and Cecinna were yet separate, and had acted independent of each other; they now find it necessary to join their forces, which they not only effected, but reinforced their armies with fresh supplies. They now resolved to hasten a general engagement, which they accomplished near Bedriacum. For a long time the contest was very sharp and obstinate; but the forces of Otho and the senate at last gave way, and victory was in favour of their opponents.

A very small knowledge of military affairs must be sufficient to shew, that the conduct of Otho was extremely injudicious. As the enemy made their approaches towards Rome, the number of defiles which they had to pass, and the improbability of procuring supplies for so large an army, dictated the impolicy of an offensive war on the part of Otho. Had he only possessed those defiles, which a small part of his forces would have enabled him to do, it would have been in his power, whenever he pleased, to harass the troops of Vitellius by frequent skirmishes



ishes and occasional attacks. By such a management, their army would have been consumed through famine and fatigue; and his peaceable possession of the government must have been established beyond a probability of future disturbance, without striking a blow.

According to the superstition of those times, historians inform us, that he too much disregarded the punctilios of certain ceremonies, which, at the period of this expedition, prefigured unfavourably. The inundation of the Tiber also interrupted him as soon as he was gone from Rome; and when he came to the distance of twenty miles from the city, he found the roads were totally blocked up, by the ruins of some buildings which had tumbled down. All these, and many other circumstances, of a nature equally disagreeable and unpromising, did not contribute to check his precipitation; for if he had even stopped here, the cause of his opponents must inevitably have been ruined.

We are told that the generals, Valens and Cæcinnæ, acted treacherously on this occasion; who, after proposals of accommodation had been made and accepted, charged his forces at unawares, under a pretence of approaching to salute him, and put them to the rout.

By this defeat the fate of the empire was determined. For though, from the former successes of Otho, he had sufficient encouragement, by prudent management, to hope for better fortune, he gave himself up to a sort of desperation; and resolved upon an attempt, not very consistent with his soft and effeminate disposition. Nor could all the arguments or intreaties of those around him, prevail with him to lay aside such a hasty resolution; but determining to die to spare the blood of his countrymen, he effected it with the most astonishing calmness and tranquility; and at the same time expressed such a tender and humane regard for his soldiers, that many of them killed themselves around his funeral pile.

It is astonishing to any reflecting mind, in the present times, how he could so easily give up his hopes. He had witnessed the fidelity of the Prætorian soldiers, and had in his army many fresh troops which had not been engaged; others would have poured in from Dalmatia, Pannonia, and Mysia, nor were those who had been routed in so bad a condition, that they would not eagerly have grasped the opportunity of effacing their disgrace, and revenging the fraud and perfidy of their enemies. But by that fatality, which the spirit of the times alone can account for, was this extraordinary revolution effected, after a short reign of three months and five days.

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His utter aversion to the idea of civil war is also transmitted to us by Suetonius, on the authority of his own father, who was, at that time, tribune of the thirteenth legion, which marched out with Otho on this occasion. Whilst he was only a private person, an accidental conversation about Brutus and Cassius, threw him into a state of horror and consternation; and it was firmly believed, notwithstanding the motives which already have been mentioned, that he never would have thought of dispossessing Galba, if the consequences of war had ever possessed his mind.

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## C H A P. XXXI.

### VITELLIUS, *the Eighth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 821. A. D. 69.]

**V**ITELLIUS was not yet arrived from Gaul, when his generals, with the misconduct and cowardice of Otho, effected this extraordinary revolution. He was now 56 years of age, being about 23 when his father Lucius Vitellius was made governor of Syria, by the appointment of Tiberius; which government he held about four years, and was succeeded by Petronius, by order of Caligula. He had also been honoured with three consulships, and was appointed regent during the absence of Claudius in Britain; though he was not distinguished for the nobility of his family, so much as by his actions.

On the subject of his origin, however, there are various opinions; for while some related, according to Suetonius, that he was of a very noble and very ancient family, others maintained that he was of a novel, low, and dishonourable extraction. But he supposes that these extremes originated, on one hand, in flattery, and on the other, in disappointment and calumny.

WHEN this general arrived in Italy from Gaul, and had proceeded as far as Bedriacum, where his officers had met with so signal success, he surveyed with pleasure the putrified bodies of men and animals which were scattered around. The  
flesh



stench was so intolerable, that many of his attendants complained greatly; to whose remarks he replied with much inhumanity and impiety, That "a dead enemy smells well, but a dead citizen better."

OF all persons imaginable, there was the least prospect of any good from Vitellius. The prognostications, which were made by the astrologers at his birth, being extremely unfavourable, he was sedulously restrained, during the life of his father, from exercising any employment whatever. He passed his infancy and the flower of his youth at Caprea, amongst persons of the lowest and most contemptible description, who were subservient to the pleasures of Tiberius; where he acquired a very bad character. His vices also increased with his age; and his debaucheries were so natural and easy, that no other course of life was agreeable to him. By his skill in charioteering, he became a desirable favourite of Caligula, as he was afterwards of Claudius, by his skill in the games. The same qualities recommended him to Nero; but he was more particularly serviceable to him in frequently presiding at the games of this emperor.

By his obsequiousness and qualifications to flatter the predominant vices and foibles of these princes, he was advanced to the highest offices in the state. He was appointed proconsul of Africa, and had the care of the public works. For the space of two years, indeed, he conducted himself in the province with much integrity. He was afterwards sent, by Galba, into lower Germany against the opinion of every one, which was attributed to the influence of Vinus, whom we have before mentioned; though it is doubtful whether it was not designed as an act of contempt rather than of favour, to afford him the means of gluttony, by which he had ruined himself at Rome. His creditors, who flocked in crowds around him, occasioned him much difficulty to effect his departure; and he was obliged to leave his family in hired lodgings, and to deposit some jewels as security for payment.

THESE difficulties being overcome, when he arrived in the province he found that the soldiers were not very affectionate to their emperor, and had an anxious desire to stir up some new troubles. Here he was received with the utmost demonstrations of joy, as the son of a man who had been three times consul; considering it as an act of the gods, for which they could not be sufficiently thankful.

He was no sooner entered into the camp, than he endeavoured to secure their good-will, by acceding to the several requests which were made to him, and granting a general  
pardon



pardon for all past offences; so that he had scarcely been there a month before they came one evening, unseasonable as it was, into his chamber suddenly, where they took him up and immediately saluted him emperor. They now carried him through the principal streets; but before his return to his apartment, fire was prepared in the chimney, at which his attendants were alarmed, as a bad presage of the consequences, which he overruled in these words, "Have courage, my friends, this flame is only to shine upon us." They now conferred upon him the surname of Germanicus, which he accepted with much pleasure; but refused to take the name of Cæsar.

WHEN he had heard of Galba's murder, he set the affairs of the province in order, and divided the forces under his command; of which he sent forward one part against those of Otho, who had usurped the empire, and the other remained under his own command. We are informed that many very propitious circumstances presaged success to the army of his generals, particularly the flight of an eagle round the standards, which also went before them in their march. On the contrary, it happened that every thing respecting the march of his own army, had a very unfavourable aspect; for his laurel crown, for which he had a religious veneration, fell from his head into the river, and when he was administering justice some time after at Vienna, a cock came and pitched upon his shoulder whilst he was upon his tribunal, and afterwards on his head. To these presages the respective events corresponded; for his generals were successful in establishing his empire, but he was not fortunate enough to keep it.

We are sufficiently informed, by ancient authors, that his march towards Italy, was ridiculous and absurd; that he drank wine without restraint, and in the most public manner, in profusion, and greatly debased himself by familiarity with the soldiers, and other mean and degrading actions. His saying on his arrival at Bebriacum has been already mentioned, and he conducted himself with equal absurdity in the other parts of his progress.

HIS entry into Rome was vain and pompous. It had more the appearance of a military triumph than of a procession to take peaceable possession of an empire. His sword was displayed amongst the military ensigns; his officers were arrayed in the dress and habiliments of war; and his soldiers paraded with the airs of a conquering army. Civil and divine rights were equally disregarded; he declared, by an edict, that magistrates should be elected but once in ten years, seized upon the office of sovereign pontiff, and made himself perpetual consul.



consul. It was a sufficient indication of the method in which he proposed to govern, that he sacrificed publicly to the manes of Nero in the midst of the Field of Mars, and in a general assembly of priests; that he afterwards, at a solemn festival, demonstrated his pleasure as a player on the harp, and other actions inconsistent with his dignity.

LITTLE else could indeed be expected from those who principally directed his affairs. Puppet-players or mountebanks, charioteers, and persons of the basest condition, were his chief advisers. Amongst the foremost of these was his freed-man, Asiaticus; whom he seemed to sport with, by changing his condition from a slave to a citizen, and from a citizen to a slave, as the caprice or humour of the master dictated.

THE infolencies and outrages, in the commission of which he encouraged his soldiers on their arrival at Rome, were only equalled by his own luxury, gluttony, and cruelty. We may judge of the first by his wasting more than seven millions English money in about four months time, in the pursuit of his pleasures and enjoyments, which were the only things in which he concerned himself. Besides this, he ruined entirely many cities and considerable families, whose only means of recommendation to his favour consisted in profuse banquets, and magnificent entertainments; in which he was so oppressive and injurious, that he would often invite himself to the tables of his subjects, so as to breakfast with one, dine with another, and sup with a third, on the same day.

IMMEDIATELY on his arrival at Rome, to assume the command of the empire, his brother made him a most sumptuous feast, consisting of a supper, at which were served up two thousand fishes of the most exquisite kinds, and seven thousand birds; not to mention many other instances of the profusion and extravagance which he occasioned to others, or in which he habituated himself.

OF his cruelty, the most intolerable instances have been transmitted to us. His former creditors, who had strongly opposed his departure from Rome, when he went to the army, were in a very uncomfortable situation; who, as well as those farmers, who had exacted their dues in the countries through which he passed, felt the weight of his avenging hand. He caused one of them, merely for coming to salute him, to die before his face, saying, "that he wished to feast his eyes." When another had been condemned to death, the intercession of his two children involved them in the punishment of their father. When a Roman knight had assured him, that his inheritance was by will to come to this emperor, he compelled  
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the unhappy man to produce that will; and when he had found that the testator's freeman was to be co-heir, he ordered that both their throats should be cut. He punished all astrologers and diviners, on the very first information, with death; that they might be deterred from interpreting any unfavourable auguries, or predicting any calamitous events; because they had had the hardiness to declare, "That his reign should not continue a year." And after he had published his edict for banishing them before the first day of January, they caused a writing to be set up in the forum, in these words; "We, in the name of the ancient Chaldeans, give warning to VITELLIUS, the emperor, to depart the world before that day." But he caused the death of his own mother, on the report of one of them, "That he would reign a long time in security, if he survived her."

To such a strange carelessness and stupidity did he surrender himself, that nothing but these and many similar horrid cruelties could put him in mind of his exalted state. Against all dangers and exigencies he fortified himself, so as almost to lose the remembrance of things past, and the thought of things to come. The very discourse of war was strictly forbidden in the city; and no mention of it was ever made in his presence.

HAVING thus made himself odious, both to the city and country, the armies of Mæsia and Pannonia revolt against him in the eighth month of his empire; whose example is followed by those of Judæa and Samaria, who declare for their commander Vespasian, one part of whom take the oath of allegiance in his presence, and the other in his absence.

WE shall here take notice of the transactions in Judæa, as they are connected with the civil history of the empire. The revolt of the Jews, which has been formerly noticed, and which might at first have been easily suppressed by Florus, had risen to a very alarming height. It was now time to think seriously of checking those enormities, of which the Jews, partly from oppression, but more from opposition, had been guilty. In these insurrections many Romans had been killed, and much havock and destruction had ensued; whilst, on the contrary, at the instigation of Florus, 20,000 Jews were cruelly massacred at Cæsarea in one day.

FROM this time nothing but carnage and devastation were seen in all the villages of Syria as well as the neighbouring cities; whose inhabitants, on the other hand, made terrible massacres of the resident Jews, which was now become necessary as a prudent security, and to which they were sufficiently disposed from old resentment. Thus was the whole country



country of Syria exposed to the ravages of contending armies, and in a condition truly deplorable; when safety consisted only in effusion of blood, the days being spent in slaughter, and the nights in apprehensions and fears, which were even worse than death. At Alexandria in Egypt were slain in one day 50,000 Jews, who had raised a sedition in that city, by two Roman legions. To the general revolt we ought, indeed, to except the cities of Antioch and Sidon, with the inhabitants of Apamea, who from policy or mercy permitted the Jews to reside quietly among them.

BUT Cestius Gallus, then governor of Syria, assembled a powerful army to quell the insurgents, with the utmost expedition. He then invaded Judæa and Galilee, and burned both Zabulon and Joppa in his march. In the latter place he destroyed more than 8,000 Jews; and, after he had consumed Lydda, he marched directly towards Jerusalem, and after a powerful opposition, from the vast numbers of Jews which were then assembled at the feast of tabernacles, on receiving a reinforcement of fresh troops, broke into the city with his forces, and was soon master of the lower city.

WITHOUT any seeming or obvious reason, though the governor might speedily have possessed the temple and the upper city, he retreated from Jerusalem; on which the Jews were induced to pursue him, and not only destroyed above 6000 Romans, but took the greatest part of their baggage and ammunition, with their engines, slings, and other arms. These proved a dreadful means of defence afterwards, when they were closely besieged by the Roman forces under Titus. It was with much difficulty that the Romans, even with suffering such a loss, could effect their retreat to Antipatris, and from thence to Cæsarea, which was so dishonourable and disadvantageous.

THE Jews, who were elevated with these successes, created new governors on their return to Jerusalem; one of whom was Ananus, some time high priest, and dispatched other commanders into the different provinces and governments. At this time was Josephus, the famous historian, sent into Galilee; where he strengthened and fortified many towns, and collected more than 60,000 men, with which force he waited for the coming of the Romans. He frustrated all the designs of his internal enemies by good policy and management. Nor was Ananus less active in repairing the walls of Jerusalem, ordering the making all kinds of arms and warlike instruments, and very diligently preparing all things necessary for war.

THE bad posture of affairs in Judæa was communicated to the emperor by Cestius, as soon as he found himself in safety;



and he attributed much of the cause of it to the conduct of Florus. Both were in consequence recalled from their several governments; and Vespasian, though of mean birth and family, was the only person thought capable of succeeding Florus in the government of Judæa at the present crisis, when Mutianus was also sent into Syria to supersede Cestus.

VESPASIAN hastened to pass into Asia, and proceeded as far as Syria and Antioch. Here he collected all the Roman forces and auxiliaries in those parts, and soon recovered Sepphoris, which was seated on a mountain, not far from Nazareth, and was favourable to the Roman government. At this place his son Titus joined him from Alexandria with two legions and other auxiliaries; by which junction he had a well-appointed army of 60,000 men, besides baggage and attendants. Marching with this powerful force to the borders of the province of Galilee, he formed a camp; and by thus bringing his army within sight of the Jews, he hoped to terrify them into submission and obedience. Convinced that they were determined upon all possible resistance, he stormed the town of Gadara, and put all the Jews to the sword. Jotopata, where Josephus commanded in person, held out against a close siege for forty days; which at last was stormed, and 40,000 Jews perished, and this intrepid commander made a prisoner, who declared in confidence of Vespasian, their general, “that he would free him from captivity, but not until he was emperor himself.” After the labours of such a siege, the legions were refreshed and the general entertained at Cæsarea Philippi; from whence he proceeded and took Tiberias and Tarichea, on the sea of Galilee, but spared the former, at the intercession of Agrippa, whilst he destroyed the latter, which had been taken by force, cut great numbers to pieces, and sold above 30,000 for slaves. Before the end of that year the whole province of Galilee was subdued, and those places which persevered in opposition to the Roman arms became the seats of blood and carnage.

VESPASIAN, hearing of the death of Nero and the succession of Galba, deferred his designed enterprize against Jerusalem, till he should be informed of the emperor’s pleasure. For this purpose he dispatched his son Titus to Rome, who was so long delayed by contrary winds, that on his arrival in Greece he was acquainted likewise with the fate of Galba, and the advancement of Otho. This intelligence occasioned his return to Judæa. In the civil contests between Otho and Vitellius, Vespasian remained neuter, though he acknowledged Otho as emperor, till his overthrow at Bedriacum. But the success of Vitellius was no way pleasing to any of the commanders



manders in the East; and in swearing allegiance to the new emperor, it was done with the utmost imaginable gloom and heaviness.

THE war in Judæa was now renewed with the greatest fame and honour by Vespasian. He accordingly resolved to besiege Jerusalem itself. But while he was making preparations for this purpose, the murmurings and discontents increased in his army against the new emperor; those of Syria and Egypt also were equally dissatisfied, as well as the other legions of the East. They also received intelligence about the same time, that the legions of Mæsia and Pannonia had entered into the same resolution as themselves, of disallowing Vitellius, and of proclaiming Vespasian; for every one fixed their eyes upon him, whom they considered as most worthy of the sovereign authority, and best enabled to terminate the miseries of his country. Several letters and messages passed between Alexander, the governor of Egypt, and Mutianus the governor of Syria; who were both resolved that Vespasian should be emperor, though he might strenuously refuse it. Alexander, therefore, proclaimed him emperor on the first day of July; and his own army in Judæa did the same two days after, notwithstanding his absolute refusal of the honour, and, with their drawn swords, compelled him to accept the empire, threatening immediate death if he did not accede to their wishes. He now consented; and a council of war was soon after called, at which he was attended by these two governors and his son Titus. It was now determined, that Titus should continue the war against the Jews, that Mutianus should proceed to Italy with the greatest part of the legions, and that Vespasian himself should go to Alexandria, and make provision for all parts; from whence he was to join Mutianus, if necessity required, as soon as he had there finished his business. The emperor was not unmindful of his famous prisoner, Josephus, whose valour he publicly applauded, with a grateful acknowledgment of the predictions he had delivered respecting this unexpected advancement; and ordered his chains to be broken in pieces.

BEFORE Mutianus could arrive in Italy, Antonius Primus, who commanded the Mælian legions, a friend of Vespasian, had marched thither with all his forces against the followers of Vitellius under Cæcina; whom he routed entirely in one battle, and marched directly towards the city of Rome. Vitellius was extremely startled at the intelligence of this defeat; and was so irresolute and wavering, that he made himself ridiculous and despicable. We cannot detail his conduct on this occasion, which gives such abundant proof of a behaviour



so unworthy, and contemptible in an emperor; but a civil commotion ensued in the city, wherein the capitol itself was besieged and laid in ashes, and Sabinus the governor slain. Though Vitellius had before offered to treat for his surrendering the empire, Antonius would now hearken to no terms. When he approached the walls of Rome, he made a vigorous attack on the city on three sides; but the forces of Vitellius sallied out, and a furious battle of long continuance ensued. At last they were driven within the city, and pursued through the Campus Martius and all the streets with a terrible slaughter.

It added greatly to the horror of the scene, that the people were now celebrating their Saturnalia; who, in the midst of these devastations, determined to enjoy the pleasures of the festival, converting this most dreadful calamity into mirth and jollity, and preserving a relish for every vicious excess in their extremest miseries. The most heterogeneous mixture of cruelty and lewdness, of barbarity and debauchery, was every where conspicuous. In one place there was nothing but wounding and killing, in another nothing but tippling and bathing. Here you might behold piles of mangled bodies and currents of blood; there you would see the most shameless prostitutes and the most abominable obscenities. To the most scandalous licentiousness of the most dissolute peace were contrasted in one view all the deplorable calamities of the most cruel and horrible captivity. In this awful manner was this opulent city, the most magnificent in the known world, of which it was the head and fountain, taken and ravaged by her own subjects.

As this was of fatal consequence to many thousand people, who were necessarily involved in this heavy visitation, it determined also the fate of this emperor. By his wavering conduct and shifting about from place to place, he found himself deserted by all his domestics and guards; when he took a girdle, filled with pieces of gold, and concealed himself in the lodge of a porter, where he was discovered and drawn from his covert. Finding, however, that the soldiers did not know him, he was on the point of escaping by means of a falsehood; but being recollected, he craved his life till Vespasian's arrival, to whom he pretended he had something of importance to communicate, and begged that he might be secured in prison, if they thought good, till that opportunity occurred. But all intreaties were vain and useless; for they immediately fastened his hands behind him, and threw an halter about his neck, with which, after tearing his clothes, they dragged him along half-naked, through the VIA SACRA, or principal street,



street, with every other indignity which was offered to the most notorious malefactors. At the customary place of execution of the most notorious criminals, he was dispatched with many wounds; from whence he was ignominiously dragged with a hook, and thrown into the Tiber, after a short, but shocking reign of eight months and five days. His brother and son were also martyrs to his detestable conduct, and suffered in consequence of his enormous crimes; by which, and by his own disgraceful end, he too sadly verified his mother's fears and apprehensions, who bitterly wept and bewailed his misfortune of being sent to the army, as if she foreboded the consequence of such advancement.

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## C H A P XXXII.

VEASPASIAN, *the Ninth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 821. A. D. 69.]

THE steps by which Vespasian arrived to his present dignity have been particularly stated; as they lead to a very important period in the Roman History, and equally relate to that serious and awful catastrophe of the destruction of Jerusalem, which is a very distinguished feature in this reign. At the time when the victory was completed in the death of Vitellius, which confirmed him in the peaceable possession of the empire, to which he had been designed near six months before, he was not removed from Alexandria.

It could not be expected that the dreadful ravages of such a scene could be abated instantly; but, as soon as the general could in some degree reduce the army and people into order, the Roman senate assembled, and Vespasian was immediately and unanimously declared emperor. They were not content with this only, but they gave his two sons the titles of Cæsar; and also nominated Titus to be consul with his father, for the year which was now commencing, and Domitian was appointed prætor, with consular power. Many persons were rewarded with great revenues and dignity, and in particular  
Mutianus



Mutianus and Antony, who had been instrumental in effecting so happy an establishment. Couriers were afterwards dispatched without delay to inform Vespasian of what had passed; with a deputation of formal obedience to him, and a request that he would speedily return to Rome.

WHEN he left that city, he committed the command of the forces in the east to his son Titus, as had been agreed on in the council, wherewith he was to prosecute the war against the Jews; and in his journey towards Rome he was met many miles by the senate and near half its inhabitants, to welcome his approach, and to testify their approbation of an emperor of such great and experienced virtues. In such an expectation they were not disappointed; for he was equally attentive to the reward of merit, and to the forgiveness of enemies, as he was to reform the depraved manners of the citizens, and to exhibit his own good example for their imitation.

It has been observed already, that Vespasian was not of a noble family: but he was greatly in favour with Caligula, as he was also in the subsequent reign, in which, after a march into Germany, as the general of an army, he was ordered into Great-Britain, where he performed many gallant actions. He fought three general battles, and subdued two powerful nations; by which twenty principal cities and towns came under the dominion of the Romans, with the Isle of Wight, upon its confines in the south.

HAVING incurred the displeasure of Nero, by inattention to his degrading exercises, he was sufficiently fortunate to retire from public view; by which means he happily escaped the effects of his resentment. With surprise and astonishment he received the direction of this emperor, to take the government of the province of Judæa, as we have already noticed, in consequence of the unaccountable conduct of his predecessor. By this providential intermission, which co-operated with many revelations from heaven, the Christians were enabled to retire from the city, and to retreat to Pella, a few miles east of the sea of Galilee; whereby they escaped the dreadful evils which afterwards beset the Jews.

MANY had been the favourable auspices with which Vespasian had been encouraged to hope for the empire. But he little attended to these monitions, until the dispute between Otho and Vitellius had commenced. He was then confirmed in the idea of succeeding to it, by many circumstances; though at last he did not accept of the declaration in his favour without the utmost necessity. In such an age of augury, we may be allowed to repeat a few instances in so extraordinary a case. He had three children by his wife, who was a daughter of Flavius



Flavius Liberalis, register of the finances, who had been declared a freeman in a regular way. At the birth of a daughter, who was born before the sons, a sacred oak suddenly shot forth a branch from its trunk, which was very small and soon became dry; to which the shortness of her life, which was scarce a year, exactly corresponded. When Titus, his elder son, was born, it shot out a large and strong branch, from whence a presage of great happiness was immediately drawn. Domitian, another son, was afterwards borne by her in due course of time, when a third was observed which was large as a tree, and predicted a certainty that he should be Cæsar. To pass by numerous records of this nature, the cypress tree shall only be mentioned, which stood also on a part of the inheritance of his ancestors, and was miraculously torn up by the roots without any tempest; and on the following day recovered and appeared more verdant and lively than ever. It is needless to repeat the prediction of Josephus to the same purpose.

THOUGH the Jews, by these revolutions in the empire, had some relaxation from the effects of the war; they had little respite from one another, through their internal factions and dissensions. Nothing but robbery, pillages, and murders were heard of in all parts; till, by increasing in numbers, they committed such ravages and cruelties, as at least equalled all the miseries and calamities which they had received from the Roman armies. Nor was Jerusalem itself exempt from the effects of such violent outrages against society; for these banditti, after loading themselves with plunder and rapine, forcibly entered the city, and consumed the provisions of the people, which they also filled with slaughter and dissension. Indeed there was no place in Judæa, which did not then suffer in an unheard of manner; for such as were without the city had no restraint from robbery and pillage, and those whose towns were destroyed by such means assembled together, and in powerful force broke into other temples and towns.

ONE of the two principal factions which distracted the province of Judæa during the suspension of arms, occasioned as we have already related, was headed by one John, who had fled into the city from his government of Giscala, when he pretended to capitulate with Titus the preceding year; the other by one Simon, a bold and intrepid man, having collected a great multitude of these robbers and murderers, who had maintained their ground in the mountainous parts, and whose increasing strength enabled them to attack and reduce many cities and towns, which they continued with so much success as actually to approach and invest Jerusalem itself with all his



forces. Besides these, a set of zealots had privately admitted 20,000 Idumæans into the city, under pretence of assistance, who miserably harassed the inhabitants, so that 8000 citizens were massacred the first night, besides a vast number of the meaner sort, and on another occasion, 12,000 of superior rank shared the same fate. Ananus, the high-priest, who had condemned James the Apostle, was of this number.

At the time that Simon was ravaging Idumæa and Judæa, their countrymen were opposing the cruelties of John, the commander of the Zealots; and, killing many of his men, and burning down his palace, they forced him to take refuge in the temple. To prevent the effects of his revengeful temper, the citizens, as if their present evils were not sufficiently weighty, agreed to admit Simon with his army of banditti. Eleazar, about this time, who had before headed the Zealots, envied John's authority, and drew over to himself many of his soldiers, who seized on the inward parts of the temple. By these contentions among the different factions, the temple and altar were abominably polluted with blood, the provisions of many years were destroyed, and the famine, which speedily overtook them on the return of Titus to the siege, was by these intestine commotions occasioned.

From the nature and appointment of the army, which now came against them, they might reasonably conclude that the Roman general was in earnest. He was accompanied by Alexander, governor of Egypt, Agrippa, and Sohemus; and Josephus himself relates that he was in this army, by which means he was qualified to relate, in the most affecting manner, the miserable destruction and havock of his countrymen.

NOTWITHSTANDING the approach, and encampment of Titus and the provincial armies before Jerusalem, in the beginning of April which succeeded Vespasian's accession to the empire; though the three unnatural factions in the city agreed unanimously to join and oppose the Roman army, their private resentments flamed forth with its former vigour, whenever that army was in a situation which freed them from immediate danger. At the first approach, they sallied forth, indeed, with astonishing fury and resolution, by which they created confusion and disorder among the Romans, and obliged them to forsake their camp and flee to the mountains. But Titus, to whom a repulse of this nature was not a conclusive proof of valour, soon returned to renew his attack, and, after many signal actions, drove their whole body into the city.

As this was the season for celebrating the passover, great multitudes of people were then assembled. Added to their  
other



other causes of scarcity and distress, this was another source of calamity to the inhabitants, and the period of famine was proportionably hastened. By the surrounding army, all their external supplies were cut off, and the mad rage of faction had destroyed their internal stock. In a short time, therefore, this scourge of war began to be manifest amongst the lower orders of people; and very soon after the higher classes were not wholly exempt from it.

BUT many difficulties attended the siege, which called forth all the skill and experience of Titus, to combat. The city was strongly fortified by three walls, on every part where it was accessible, in demolishing which his utmost abilities and powers were required; but when, though with constant opposition, he had placed his engines or battering rams against the outer wall, he broke through in about a month from his first approaches, and by this means possessed the north part of the city to the castle of Antonia and the vale of Cedron. Five days after he broke through the second wall, and possessed himself of the new lower city; from whence, by vigorous sallies of the besieged, he was repulsed, but in four days more effected this business. Proceeding immediately to raise mounts, and to erect his engines for possessing himself of the temple and upper city; they were totally destroyed, together with the engines, after the labour of seventeen days, by different sallies from the city, in which much courage and intrepidity were displayed. Titus now determined in a council of war, to surround the whole city by a wall or intrenchment, which would not only prevent the flight of the besieged, but intercept all relief that might approach the city. This incredible work was finished in three days, though it was 39 furlongs, or near five miles in compass; and yet the factious were as resolute as ever, though the famine was begun to afflict the soldiers.

When Titus had possessed himself of the north part of the city, he wished, by every act of clemency and commiseration, to convince them, that they should not only be pardoned, but experience the utmost indulgence, if they would submit. But this was attributed to cowardice and timidity; and all conditions whatever were rejected. And again, when he had established himself in the lower city, he was anxious to spare them and to save the temple, and particularly sent their countryman, Josephus, to prevail upon them to submit, by his exhortation from their walls; yet all his pathological intreaties and persuasions were thrown away, and scoffs, reproaches, and insults were the rewards of his humanity. He now determined to exercise his utmost force against this obstinate and rebellious people; and, to add to the calamity, the leaders of the



factions had given orders to prevent the citizens from escaping, which they were now determined upon, by guarding and securing all the avenues.

AFTER this, about three weeks more were employed in erecting new mounts, the materials of which were procured at the distance of 90 furlongs. These were again attacked from within, but this attempt was unsuccessful. In the beginning of July the ram was brought to the wall of Antonia, and a breach was made on the fifth of that month, through which the Romans broke into the castle, and pursued the flying Jews to the temple.

We cannot detail the particular circumstances, by which the total overthrow of the city and temple were effected. Every effort and endeavour to save them, especially the latter, was in vain. The determined obstinacy and delusion, under which they were influenced, were such as no history can afford their parallel. Of the effects of the famine and consequent mortality, the following is recorded as a small specimen. From the 14th of April to the first of July, more than one hundred and fifteen thousand of the poorer sort were carried out of the city, to be buried at the public charge; above 600,000 of the ordinary rank were cast dead out of the gates, and others who died were innumerable; and when the deaths increased so fast, that they were not able to bury the bodies, they shut them up in the largest houses. Six hundred crowns were given for a bushel of corn; and the kennels were continually raked to find the dung, &c. of oxen, to satisfy their hunger; wives took the meat from their husbands mouths, children from their parents, and mothers from their infants; old men were driven from their meat as useless, and young ones were tortured to confess where their provisions were concealed; and all suffered in a manner totally unheard of in history.

IN this memorable and uncommon siege, the captives amounted to 97,000, and those who perished in it to 1,100,000. Besides these, 237,490 fell in the Jewish wars; all together making the astonishing number of 1,337,490. They were hereby wholly extirpated as a nation, after a continuance of more than 1100 years under the immediate protection of Heaven; and thus they received the punishment of their transgressions, for the numerous offences which they had committed, and especially for that of killing the Lord of Life and Glory, when they daringly imprecated the wrath of Heaven upon themselves and their posterity for the heinous crime. And when, after almost a six months siege, the whole city came into the hands of the Romans, Titus commanded,



as an indelible mark of its total destruction, that both that and the temple should be entirely rased by causing a plough to be brought over it; so that literally an expression of the prediction was fulfilled in less than forty years, "That not one stone should remain upon another." Yet, to bear testimony to the stateliness of the city, as well as its strength and beauty to posterity, the west part of the wall, with three towers, were suffered to remain.

SUCH was the hardened and obstinate manner, in which this devoted people hastened their destruction; the memory of which ought to be impressed on every mind, as a distinguished period in the history of their conquerors, as well as their own. From this awful scene, Titus withdrew himself to Cesarea, where he passed the winter; nearly about the same time that Vespasian left Alexandria to go to Rome. After visiting Berytus and Antioch, Titus returned by way of Alexandria to return thither also; and as he took Jerusalem in his way, he could not refrain from lamenting the loss of so noble a city, and brooding over the ruins, and that such a calamity should be the means of transmitting his name to posterity.

THOUGH Vespasian had a great aversion to pomp and ceremony, yet a triumph was decreed by the senate both to himself and his son Titus; to the former for having so successfully managed the beginning of the Jewish expedition, and to the latter for having so effectually completed it. This was solemnized speedily after the son's arrival at Rome, in praise of whom the whole city re-echoed for his valour, skill, and intrepidity. The spectacles displayed upon this occasion were as magnificent and solemn as any which had been known, and for number and variety were as admirable as human invention could devise; for whatever was esteemed valuable or beautiful, was that day exposed by persons of the greatest opulence. The spoils of the temple, which were almost incredible, were followed by the body of the Jewish law, which closed this part of the glorious procession; and Simon, of whom mention has been already made, who had been dragged from his concealment in a vault, and reserved for this purpose, was ignominiously drawn along with a rope about his neck, and afterwards slain. John, who had fled from Giscala, where he was governor, was also discovered in a similar condition, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment. To the honour of Titus a triumphal arch was erected, of extraordinary beauty and workmanship; on which his noble exploits against the Jews were described, as a lasting monument of the perverseness and obstinacy of that people.



MANY kingdoms were, about this time, reduced into the form of Roman provinces; amongst whom are reckoned Achaia, Lycia, Rhodes, Byzantium, and Lamôs, with Thrace, Cilicia, and Comagena. Legions were also sent into Cappadocia to prevent the incursions of Barbarians; where a consular government was, at this time, established.

SOME of those states and provinces which had already acknowledged their allegiance to Rome, were in much confusion and disorder, and the disposition of the soldiers was extremely depraved; but, by a necessary stroke of policy in punishing the Vitellians, and rewarding his own soldiers, whom he had brought into discipline, as well as for their valour, he appeased all disturbances in every part.

AFTER these public concerns were settled, he applied himself to regulate the internal disorders of the city, and to form a settled government. He began by a reform of the two orders of senators and knights, who, in the late perilous and corrupt times, had been strangely degenerated; the most unworthy of which he removed, and replaced them with persons of integrity and honesty in different parts of Italy and the provinces. A mode for the more speedy termination of differences before the Judges was likewise put in practice; and as the morals of the citizens also were grossly corrupted, he procured an arret of the senate to condemn to the condition of slavery any woman who should prostitute herself to the slave of another. To reform the corruption of usurers, he ordered, that no money should be recoverable from young heirs, if it was lent to be repaid with advantage on their fathers' decease. Upon all occasions, indeed, he was very severe in the punishment of vice and lewdness.

HIS love of virtue and goodness were manifested in various respects. If he found any senators of good reputation, but in low circumstances, he was a constant contributor to their support; and he likewise gave pensions to such consuls as could not support their proper character to enable them to maintain their dignity. He rewarded every kind of merit, and was particularly attentive to the arts and sciences; engaging, by liberal stipulations, the best masters in all professions to resort to Rome. Such were his courtesy and clemency both in public and private, that scarce one innocent person was punished during his reign; and if any such misfortune accidentally occurred, it was effected by calumniators in his absence from the city. So contrary was his temper to that of most of his predecessors, that he could not behold the sufferings of a criminal without discovering his compassion by sighs and tears.



THE immensity of spoils which was brought from Judæa occasioned Vespasian to begin a new temple to peace, wherein to deposit them. Opposition gave way on every side to the prudence and justice of his paternal government; and in a short time after their splendid triumph, the temple of Janus was shut up as a token of universal peace. This, indeed, must be considered with regard to foreign enemies; for the Jews were not entirely quiet, but for a short time resisted the Roman arms, by possessing two or three forts, which, being impregnable, were reduced by famine. Some of these escaping into Egypt incited the Jews there to revolt, and occasioned great disturbances; on which their temple near Memphis was plundered by the governor, and their use of it prohibited. At Cyrene also and in other places, the same spirit of dissatisfaction prevailed; which terminated with the slaughter of some thousands of the Jews.

VESPASIAN contributed largely for the repair of the Colossus; and, on the misfortunes, which many persons felt severely, by earthquakes and fires, particularly Salamis and Paphos, amongst others, restored them to their former condition. On many other occasions, also, he was generous and liberal. Yet could he not escape the charge of avarice, for which, perhaps, there was some foundation; as the guilty sometimes bought themselves off with money, and escaped punishment. The levies and taxes also were very heavy; and some of his impositions were very peculiar, amongst which was his excise upon urine, for which his son Titus remonstrated with him. He also obliged the Jews throughout the empire to pay two drachmas each yearly to the capitol, as before they had done to the temple at Jerusalem. But such was the deranged state of the finances of the empire, that much exertion was necessary to enable the wheels of government to recover their motion. He banished from Rome all the philosophers, whose disrespect was notoriously intolerable, though pride was not his ruling passion; and Demetrius, the cynic, meeting the emperor soon after on the road, had the hardiness to revile him openly, which he generously passed over with applying to him only the epithet of dog, which alluded to the name of his sect. Soon after, he joined his son Titus in the quality of censor; under whom the last public census or numbering the Roman people was made, in order to a capitation or poll tax.

SOME time after a great pestilence raged in the city of Rome, of which for many days 10,000 died daily; and one Peregrinus, a cynic philosopher, in a subsequent year, by a pretended veneration for the Christians, extorted much money from



from them. Afterwards he fell into poverty, and, at the Olympic games, being universally detested for his fraud and treachery, was seized by a phrenzy or diabolical vanity; on which he leaped alive into the fire, in a way similar to the Indian Brachmans.

VESPASIAN'S disposition was facetious to the very last; so that when he was very fast approaching to death, to which he was perfectly sensible and attentive, he did not cease from jokes and raillery. He was always particularly affable at his meals; and so strong was his propensity to pleasantry and humour in conversation, that he frequently descended to vulgarities of expression, from an anxiety of creating good fellowship.

MANY noble and beneficent actions were performed by him, to effect a happy establishment of the empire. He constantly passed the summer at his country house in Campania, but was always attentive to the concerns of government; and, in his last sickness there, occasioned by an immoderate use of cold water, which greatly injured his intestines, and brought on a diarrhæa, he did not relax in his endeavours to serve his people. When reduced to the utmost extremity, he suddenly resumed his former courage and bravery, and, with the assistance of those around him, rose up with this noble and spirited exclamation, "That an emperor ought to die standing;" by which extraordinary effort, nature gave way, and he expired in the hands of his supporters, in the 69th year of his age, after a reign of ten years wanting only six days, from the time that he was first proclaimed emperor by the armies of Syria and Alexandria, which was near six months before the defeat and consequent decease of Vitellius.

He was for the ninth time joint consul with his son Titus, at his death, which was highly lamented by persons of all descriptions; whose memory was preserved by all good men, for his extraordinary conduct and moderation, both in war and peace, being little inferior to Julius Cæsar in the former, or behind Augustus in the latter. Providence seems to have raised him up to compose the disturbances and restore the dignity and splendor of the Roman empire, and to be the instrument of putting a final end to the dispensation of the Jews, by the destruction of their city, temple, and worship; who had the good fortune to die a natural death, so contrary to the fate of most of the preceding and subsequent emperors, and the first of the Cæsars whose life was thus terminated.

He was not meanly acquainted with literature; but used to recite Greek verses, on many occasions, with much pleasure. His general encouragement of learning has been already alluded to; and in his reign Silius Italicus, the poet, is to be  
noticed,



noticed, with the renowned Pliny, who perished early in the succeeding reign, as we are fully acquainted by his son, by the burning lava of Mount Vesuvius, which then, for the first time, broke out with astonishing fury.

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C H A P. XXXIII.

TITUS, *the Tenth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 831. A. D. 79.]

AT the time of Vespasian's decease, Titus was in his seventh consulship. He succeeded to the empire by the general consent of the people, as well as by his father's will. For though he had given many reasons to doubt the manner of his reigning, and consequently had prejudiced the public against him, from his severity in promoting his father's impositions, and his voluptuous life, together with his extravagant passion for Berenice the sister of Agrippa; yet the miseries of civil discord, which had thereby been happily quelled, were too recent in their memory to hazard opposition. He was considered as a second Nero, and his reputation and esteem with the people were extremely unfavourable; though he had served in so many wars with the greatest honour, and discharged many civil offices with no less wisdom, during the reign of his father.

His extreme haughtiness and violence had been much disapproved, during the reign of his father, for whom he transacted many affairs of the empire; and he made use of means, not altogether justifiable, to punish those whom he suspected of any evil designs. Of this we have a remarkable instance in his treatment of Cecinna, a man of consular dignity, in which the greatest breach of hospitality was demonstrated; whom he caused to be assassinated, after inviting him to supper, as he was leaving the hall where the banquet had been served up. Indeed the only culpable part of this business consisted in this breach of confidence, and in the want of a judiciary process to produce his condemnation; for a writing had been found, which was signed with his own hand, and  
clearly



clearly proved that a seditious discourse had been prepared by him to excite the soldiers to a revolt. Yet as the true cause at that time was not well understood, it served to render him extremely odious ; and it may justly be asserted, that no prince ever came to the empire with a worse character, or with greater reluctance of the people.

BUT all these slanders and accusations were speedily changed into praises, by the very different conduct which he assumed on his coming to the empire. It was soon discovered that he was now as remarkable for all sorts of virtues, as before he had been notorious for the greatest vices. Having formerly in his debauches accustomed himself to persevere in them till midnight, with his most dissolute acquaintance ; his entertainments now took another face, in which he studied more to render them agreeable than magnificent. He had sufficient resolution to withdraw himself from Berenice, whom he passionately loved, and was as passionately beloved by her ; and all her fine accomplishments and alluring arts were insufficient to induce him to change that resolution, as he found that such connection was entirely disagreeable to the people of Rome. More effectually to establish this restraint upon his pleasures, and to moderate his passions, he discarded several of the principal instruments of those pleasures ; and as such concluded that they were highly unsuitable companions in his present dignified station, whatever satisfaction, as a private man, he had before experienced in their society. By such manifest and demonstrable instances of respect and veneration for the public opinion, even to the highest pitch of self-denial, the general voice was soon changed in his favour ; and of him it was no less agreeably than truly said, “ That if ever any man abstained from what he had a right to, Titus was the person.”

His compassion and love of justice were conspicuous. No citizen was at any time injured by him, nor did he ever wish for or attempt to possess the property of another. He frequently refused to accept the customary contributions ; and his general object in his whole conduct seems to have been, to perform every thing in his power for the good of his people. It was also a rule with him, to which he most strictly and inviolably adhered, never to send away any petitioner with an unpleasing answer ; to which, indeed, his domestics observed, “ That it would oblige him to promise more than he could perform,” but this could not alter his general sentiments. His sweetness and civility, as well as a natural principle of goodness, were so predominant, that when he was reminded one evening, of his having done no good action that day, he expressed a most heart-felt concern, “ My friends, I have lost this day.”

What



What a principle was this to flow from the mouth of a heathen, who had been immersed in all kinds of vice and lasciviousness!

IN proposing an entertainment of gladiators, he declared, "That he did it not to please his own fancy, but to amuse his people who would naturally be spectators." Nor did he ever ridicule or manifest any signs of mockery or contempt, at any word or gesture which might be less pleasing or agreeable to the opinion of the people; never condescending to any meanings of conduct or action, which was degrading to majesty, nor suffering himself to be biassed unduly in his distribution of the prizes. He dedicated the amphitheatre, and supplied it round about with convenient baths. A naval combat also, with other sports, as well as those of the gladiators, were displayed on this occasion. His condescension also went still farther; for he frequently permitted the common people to enter his baths.

THE misfortunes of the civil wars had given rise to informers and suborners of witnesses; and we have mentioned that Vespasian endeavoured to reform the judicial proceedings and conduct of the advocates in the courts of justice. But such great changes could not be effected at once; and Titus was reduced to exercise compulsory means to restrain these detestable practices. He determined to punish offenders of this kind in a most exemplary way; which he did, first, by condemning them to be publicly whipped, then led into the area of the amphitheatre to be exposed to public view, and, lastly, by commanding some to be sold for slaves, and others to be banished into the most solitary islands. And that no persons should, in future, rashly commit the same unwarrantable acts, he published an account of the several punishments, under various considerations, which should be inflicted for a similar conduct. He also published a law, by which, within a certain number of years, all claims to the property of persons deceased should be brought forward.

WHEN he took upon himself the office of sovereign pontiff, he declared, with much solemnity and energy, "That he did it to keep his hands pure and undefiled from blood." He never would consent to the death of any person, so long as there were any considerations or means of defence to plead; and he always declared, "That he had much rather submit to his own loss, than that another should be injured." Unwilling to punish without the utmost necessity, he passed over the crime of two patricians, who daringly persuaded him to set up for the empire against his father, without hinting it to any one, or shewing the least cause of displeasure; which he combated



combated by saying, “ That empire was the gift of the “ fates,” and desired them to lay aside their design. Not the least signs of resentment were displayed, though he so positively rejected and detested their application; but he continued to manifest the same public attention to them, as if nothing had occurred.

UNDER his reign, some very heavy misfortunes and deplorable accidents happened. But he acted more the part of a father than of a prince, in his endeavours to provide remedies against their effects. The very dreadful and almost incredible eruption of mount Vesuvius in Campania, accompanied with most violent earthquakes and astonishing prodigies, ruined many cities and people with a vast tract of land; and the ashes were carried through the air into distant nations, as Africa, Egypt, and even Syria. So extremely heavy was it at Rome, that it darkened the sun for many days together. In attempting to discover the cause of this wonderful phenomenon, the renowned Pliny, who was then at Misenum, and admiral of the royal navy there, by his too great curiosity and near approach, was suffocated in the smোক. When it had in some measure subsided, the emperor appointed several consular men, by lot, to convince them of his impartialty, to superintend and assist in restoring the ruins of Campania; ordering that all the effects of those who had perished by the flames, or by any other means which these had occasioned, if they had left no heirs, should be applied to repair the villages which had been damaged.

IN the following year was a great fire at Rome, which continued three days and three nights; and not only consumed the temples of many of their gods, with the pantheon, and the library of Augustus, as well as many other buildings, but even the capitol. On this occasion the emperor declared, that he would take all the loss upon himself; and for that purpose he distributed the imperial ornaments to repair the temples and public works, commissioning many knights to be overseers of the buildings, that the completion might be the more speedy.

THERE likewise succeeded a very dangerous pestilence, by which 10,000 usually died in a day. It was supposed to be the consequence of the incredible smoke and vast quantity of ashes, which had been discharged by the conflagration of Mount Vesuvius. No methods, human or divine, were omitted to abate the pestilence, and check the malignity of the distemper; every superstitious rite and species of sacrifice being resorted to, which it was supposed might have the smallest use; and every natural means of medicine was applied,  
from



from which the least success could be hoped for. In all which calamities, he spared not his own revenues, as far as he could, for the general assistance of his oppressed people.

ABOUT this time Titus conferred particular honours on the celebrated Josephus, whom he had brought as a captive from Judæa; who had, indeed, received every favour both from him and his father, on Vespasian's first coming to the empire, notwithstanding the very low and degrading sentiments which the Roman people generally entertained of the Jews. For his father had not only provided for him in the palace, but made him a free citizen of Rome, and ordered a public statue to be erected for him. He also assigned him lands in Judæa, after it was completely subdued by the Roman arms. His history of the wars of the Jews, which was finished about this time, was honourably noticed by this emperor, and ordered to be deposited in the public library, where it might be viewed by all men; and its reputation at the present day is a strong proof of the knowledge and discernment of Titus, which is universally approved for the admirable descriptions, eloquent speeches, and sublime sentiments therein contained. It may suffice to add, for the information of some of our readers, that it is a continued history from the capture of Jerusalem, by Antiochus Epiphanes, about 170 years before the Christian *Æra*, to the year of that period 72; which includes an interval of 242 years. But the last six years of it are most interesting and valuable; as they contain the history of the Jews' destruction, and describe, in the most lively and affecting manner, every part of that serious and calamitous struggle.

THE scenes which in this reign were transacting in Britain, afforded some alleviation to the miseries of the Roman people, by the calamities just mentioned. Agricola had been sent into that country in the latter end of the preceeding reign, where he shewed himself as expert in reducing the rebellious and refractory, as he was successful in civilizing those who had formerly submitted to the Roman power. The inhabitants of North Wales were the first that were subdued; at which time he made a descent upon Mona, or the island of Anglesey, which submitted to him without opposition. He was greatly employed in the restoration of discipline and good order in his own army, and endeavoured to introduce some degrees of politeness amongst those whom he had conquered; by causing the sons of the better sort to be instructed in liberal arts, and persuading them to adopt the Roman modes of dress and manners. For these successes, Titus was, for the fifteenth time, declared emperor.

BUT



BUT, notwithstanding these accumulated honours, and his own goodness and benevolence to all, he did not long live to enjoy them. His brother Domitian, who was of a restless and ambitious disposition, frequently occasioned him much trouble; though he never could prevail with himself to punish him, or even in any respect to degrade or lessen him in the eye of the public. Convinced as Titus was of his wicked machinations, and of his endeavours to seduce the soldiers to a revolt, yet he did not change his conduct towards him; but, continuing him as a brother, and behaving to him as his certain successor, intreated him particularly, with tears in his eyes, to make him the returns of reciprocal affection.

Soon after the public games, at the end of which he shed tears in abundance before the people, he withdrew into the country of the Sabines, his spirits being extremely depressed at some unfavourable auguries, and, amongst others, at its thundering in serene weather. He was seized with a fever at the first stage of his journey, so that he was obliged to be carried in a litter to Reate, where his father terminated his life, in the house of his ancestors; and some say, that on the road he drew back the curtain, and, looking up to heaven, with a heavy sigh complained, "That he had not merited the loss  
" of life, protesting that he never had cause to repent of any  
" action but one." What that was, as he never declared, so it would be extremely bold and presuming to conjecture.

It was strongly suspected that Domitian had been instrumental in procuring his death by poison, that he might more speedily enter upon the empire. He died at the country house of his ancestors, after a short, but memorable reign of two years, two months, and twenty days, from the time of his succeeding his father, in the 41st year of his age, regretted universally by the whole empire. An universal mourning ensued; and the senators, without any formal convocation, hastened to the senate house, where for a short time they shut themselves up; and on opening the doors, they paid him more honours, and bestowed upon him higher praises and encomiums, than any emperor ever obtained either before or after his death.



## C H A P. XXXIV.

DOMITIAN *the Eleventh* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 833. A.D. 81.]

AFTER the decease of Titus, his brother Domitian was universally received as emperor without the least opposition, through the venerable respect which every one had for his and his father's memory. In the beginning of his reign he was generally acceptable, by the prudent regulations which he made in the administration of government. There were no appearances of cruelty and bloodshed; no signs of oppression or rapine; no instances of fardiness or avarice. He employed himself in the exercise of many diversions and amusements, in some of which he greatly excelled.

MANY doubts, indeed, were entertained of his conduct, when he should arrive at the imperial dignity. His adulteries were too flagrant and notorious to pass unnoticed; and he married Domitia Longina, whom he had taken by compulsion from her husband Elius Lamia.

SOME TIME after, when she had borne a daughter to him, he honoured her with the title of Augusta; but notwithstanding this, when she had discovered a furious passion for one of her domestics, he divorced her. Unable to bear this separation, which was done in a transport of resentment, and burning with impatience, he retook her under a pretence that the people had earnestly persuaded and intreated him to it.

IT was customary for him, at the commencement of his reign, to withdraw for an hour into his cabinet. Here he demonstrated, though in private, the tendency of his natural disposition; where he used to amuse himself in the solitary exercise of catching flies, and torturing them by the piercings of a sharp bodkin. Vivius Crispus pleasantly enough, though as satirically, replied to one who asked him if any one was with the emperor in his cabinet, "That there was not so much there as a fly." Yet, however diminutive his ideas were in spending his time in such trifling amusements, he did not neglect many greater matters. He caused many of the works to be rebuilt, which had been destroyed by the late fire, and  
among



among others the capitol; on which, as he was ambitious of being by posterity accounted the founder, his name alone was inscribed.

Of his military expeditions, those against the Catti and Sarmatians first occur to us, as the most remarkable. Of the two legions which went against the Dacians, Opipius Sabinus, their general, who was a consular man, was defeated in the first, and in the second Cornelius Fuscus, colonel of the Prætorian Cohorts. In these wars he suffered many very great and heavy losses; but, having at last subdued and vanquished them, he twice triumphed, though on account of the Sarmatians he only carried a laurel crown to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, as an acknowledgment of his success. He had the credit of advancing the annual stipend or pay of his soldiers to twelve pieces of gold, which was equal in value to about ten guineas; which had been, and was afterwards, gradually increased, according to the increase of wealth, and the progress of military government. He also made another very equitable regulation, by which the veteran, after being twenty years in the army, was entitled to 3000 denarii, or about 100*l.* sterling, as a compensation for past services. They had also the choice of a proportionable allowance of land, if it was more desirable. The guards, in like manner, whose pay was nearly double to that of the soldiers, had their stipend advanced in proportion to their income.

By such encouragements to a military life, it is not surprising that the Roman troops were so very faithful to their leaders. For regular pay, occasional donations, with such a recompence as we have just mentioned, tended greatly to soften and alleviate the hardships of military discipline; and besides these substantial advantages, which had a great influence on their hopes and fears, they had a superstitious veneration for the golden eagle, which constantly was displayed in their standards, and, added to a sense of honour, united and kept them to their duty.

Soon after his accession to the empire, he took upon him the office of censor, and the reformation of manners; and in that capacity accomplished many things, which would not have discredited a man of better principles. All libels and defamatory writings, which were pointed at persons of quality of either sex, he totally suppressed, and disgraced their authors. He expelled a senator, who had been questor, for his great attachment and immoderate propensity to buffoonery and dancing; judging, very properly, that such practices were very much below the dignity of persons who belonged to that venerable



nable body. From women of scandalous and immoral lives he took away the use of litters, and prohibited them from being benefited by any legacies or inheritance, which might be bequeathed to them. After a Roman knight had received his wife again, whose charge or suspicion of adultery had caused him to divorce her, he judged that a man of so much levity and unsteadiness was unfit to be a judge, and he therefore struck him off from the list of the judges.

In the administration of justice, he was for some time very diligent; and frequently sat in an extraordinary manner in the courts of judicature, to supersede such partial decisions of the centumviri, as might have happened from too much favour, or from inattention. He was particularly severe upon such judges and counsellors as were corrupt in their dispositions, and accepted bribes to the perversion of justice; and Suetonius assures us, whose authority is not to be doubted, that he particularly encouraged the tribunes in person to accuse an *Ædile* of extortion, and to demand judgment against him in the senate, to compel him to refund the money he had so unjustly taken, that no place or station might serve as a sanction for iniquity. In his reformation of tedious law-suits, he pursued the steps of his father and brother; and informers were more especially punished, as a terror to others, and for the protection of honesty and innocence. Such was his diligence in causing all offenders, especially those who had abused any trusts with which they had been honoured, that persons accused of any crimes had the fairest chance of being dealt with justly; and never, either in his life or after his death, could more satisfaction be afforded to the unfortunate.

BUT the wisdom of his regulations did not stop here. In his reform of the courts of justice, he discharged all persons who had been prosecuted five years before without any termination of their fate, whose effects had been seized; and commanded that no new process should be permitted, after one year. And farther, to prohibit any useless and vexatious proceedings, ordered all those informers, who could not prove their charges, to be banished.

HIS edicts to prevent the castration of children were severe. He also moderated the price of such as were already eunuchs; in which respects he differed greatly from the conduct of his father and brother. The morals of the vestal virgins, which they had not attended to, he particularly examined into; punishing with divers and heavy punishments those whom he found guilty of any indiscretions. Such as were only convicted of one crime, had the satisfaction of dying in the most simple way, as ordinary malefactors; but others were ordered to pe-  
risha



rish by the ancient custom, with which, we have observed, that Nero was threatened by the senate. It was permitted, as an indulgence to two sisters, to chuse their mode of dying, and the persons who debauched them were banished; but on Cornelia, their superior, who had once been declared innocent, yet was afterwards convicted, the heavy sentence was denounced of being buried alive, and her associates scourged to death in full assembly. He also caused to be demolished, to shew his superstitious veneration for the Pagan religion, a monument of a freeman erected for his son, in which had been used the stones which were consigned for building the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus; and ordered that the bones and remains which were therein deposited should be thrown into the sea.

So far was he from manifesting the smallest signs of a cruel or blood-thirsty disposition, that he was almost determined, in consequence of reading a verse in Virgil, which declared those nations wicked who had killed oxen to eat them, to issue an edict, forbidding them to be sacrificed.

AFTER this account of the happy manner in which Domitian reigned for the first two years, it might have been hoped that this tranquility and good government, the effects of which he must have seen, would not have been changed for scenes of disorder and oppression. But the aspect of affairs soon appeared very differently. The Magicians and Chaldeans, and other philosophers of that time, incurred the displeasure of the emperor, who had embraced the opportunity, in consequence of a grievous earthquake, which happened near the Hellespont, of enriching themselves, through the public credulity, under pretence of appeasing the gods by sacrifices. He therefore banished them from Rome, and even from Italy; and discovered so much hatred against all philosophers and mathematicians, as to pursue them with great fury, and oblige them to fly to distant nations.

ABOUT this time he was informed of the great conquests and victories that Agricola had obtained in Britain, which affected him with the greatest degree of envy. For this admirable general had not only pursued the successes of preceding commanders, and persevered in a course of good fortune by partial victories, but he totally subdued the Caledonians, and conquered Galgacus, the general of the Britons, at the head of 30,000 men. He afterwards sent out a fleet to clear the coast of the native galleys, and thereby discovered that what is now called Great Britain was an island. It was in this expedition that he discovered, and reduced the Orkneys and other islands, and thus, by continued successes, brought the whole



whole empire to obedience and submission to the Roman government.

As Domitian had triumphed over the Catti, without once seeing them, and had returned to Rome, on the intelligence that his generals had overcome them; some German slaves, which he possessed himself of, were the trophies of valour that accompanied his entrance into Rome. The news of Agricola's exploits was, therefore, extremely unwelcome, because it served as a tacit reproach on his own inactivity. Timid and indolent, he had not sufficient spirit to emulate these services; but set himself to stifle and suppress the knowledge of them, or at least to detract from their merits. Under pretence of conferring upon him the government of Syria, Salustius Lucullus was ordered to supersede him in the command; and as he could not, without the grossest violation of propriety, when the success was once known, deny him the honours which his services deserved, he provided that the senate should decree him the usual ornaments, trophies, and statues for the purpose of exhibiting a triumph. But this was only an act of dissimulation, treachery, and injustice, for which infamous vices he had no equal; and when Agricola arrived privately, and by night, he discovered instantly his cool reception, and speedily after had the mortification to learn that the government of Syria was disposed of another way. On this he withdrew to a place of retirement; but as he soon after died, it is supposed that either his life was shortened by the great sense of the injurious treatment he had suffered, or that the emperor had employed instruments to hasten his end, by means very common in those disgraceful ages.

THE emperor now gave loose to every species of cruelty and oppression. The mask which he had hitherto assumed was laid aside; and he who had heretofore satisfied his savage temper of mind with tormenting flies, transferred, at this time, his disposition to that of torturing his fellow creatures and subjects. He spared not persons of the highest quality or rank; and all whom he had offended, as well as those who had given offence, became the certain objects of his cruelty. Elius Lamia, against whom he had exercised the most despotic power, and had frequently insulted by his piquant speeches, was one of the first objects of his tyranny; Salvius Cocceianus and Metius Pompasianus, for pretences totally foreign to all notions of sedition, also suffered. To these may be added Sallustius Lucullus, who succeeded Agricola as lieutenant general of the armies in Britain, whom he caused to die, because his name had been given to some lances of a new fashion; and Junius Rusticus, who had recorded the praises of Petus Thra-



sea and Helvidius Priscus, and had assigned them a title which was offensive to the emperor, who was now become as suspicious and ill-natured as he had before appeared to the contrary. For this cause alone were the philosophers, and all men of professed learning, driven out of Italy; and Helvidius, the son of Priscus, also lost his life, for writing some verses, under the character of Paris and Anona, to be sung upon the theatre, which censured the divorce of Augusta. Flavius Sabinus also, one of his cousin Germans, from an accidental mistake of the public crier, became a victim. But the conclusion of the civil war, which will speedily be mentioned, afforded means to satiate himself with blood; for those who had been of the opposite party were certain subjects of his vengeance, and, to discover their accomplices, he invented new tortures, which even the brutal Nero had not practised.

WE have not noticed many of the senators, some of which were of consular dignity, whom, for the slightest reasons, he deprived of life; besides numbers of others whom he banished, before his cruelties had reached to that point, from which their full scope could be exercised. He also made use of much finesse to take those, on whom his suspicions had unhappily fallen, by surprize. Only the very day before he crucified the comptroller of his household, he displayed the most artful signs of intimacy and friendship, so as to oblige him to sup with him; and on the very day that he had resolved upon the death of Aretinus Clemens, he carried him with him in his own litter. He one time invited the senators to a public entertainment, and very formally received all of them at the entrance of his palace; from whence they were conducted into a spacious hall, covered with black, and illuminated by a few melancholy lamps, which were just sufficient to discover that they were surrounded with coffins, on which were written their own names, with the display of many other objects of terror and instruments of execution. With the most agonizing ideas did they all behold these alarming preparations, when several men, each having a flaming torch in one hand, and a drawn sword in the other, their bodies being previously discoloured, burst into the room and danced round them. They now expected nothing but instant destruction, from the knowledge they had of the tyrant's capricious humour; but after some time the doors flew open, and they were informed by a messenger, that the emperor permitted them all to withdraw.

IT was a dreadful presage of the sentence which was to follow, when it was introduced by a profession of compassion and clemency; for he never determined upon a rigorous cruelty,



cruelty, without first expressing himself in terms of the utmost mildness. Artifice and dissimulation were favourite objects; and he was never more satisfactorily employed, than in sport-  
ing with the feelings and passions of his subjects. As an instance of his affected tenderness, having one day presented to the senate a catalogue of criminals, who had been accused of treason, he prefaced his motion with this insinuating address, "That he should see on that day in what manner he was beloved of the senate;" and when he had thus artfully obtained a decree, that the criminals should be punished according to the custom of their ancestors, he pretended astonishment at the severity of the punishment, when he wished to intercede in behalf of the condemned. "Permit me, conscript fathers, to obtain from your piety, what I well know is not easily to be obtained, that you will indulge the condemned with the liberty of chusing what kind of death will be most eligible to them; for by this means you will prevent your own sight of such a horrible scene, and the world will be satisfied that this is to be attributed to my assistance in your judicial assembly."

By his great expences in public works, and the sums of money lavished away in public spectacles, with the advanced pay of the soldiers, his coffers were totally drained. When this was understood, he had at first some intention of reducing the number of soldiers, which he afterwards changed, as a step which would expose him to the insults of barbarians. It has been said, indeed, that he bought off the Dacians and Sarmatians by money; and as this would enable as well as encourage them to repeat their invasions with greater advantage, the impolicy of diminishing his forces, could scarcely escape the most common judgment. Unable, therefore, to supply the exigences of government, he proceeded to all sorts of robbery and rapine. The smallest information served as a pretence for ravaging the effects both of living and dead; and it was enough if any one could declare that they had said or done any thing against the majesty of a prince. He confiscated inheritances without the least shadow of right, if he could only find any person daring enough to assert the deceased's having ever said, "That Cæsar was his heir." The Jews, with respect to their tribute, were horribly persecuted; not only those who professed Judaism openly in Rome, but others also, if he could any way discover their origin, however they might dissemble it, who had not paid what was imposed upon their nation. Suetonius tells us of an instance of this, to which, when a youth, he was an eye-witness, that he caused to



be examined before them an old man of 90, who was suspected of being a Jew, to discover whether he was circumcised.

As his pride increased, he not only caused his statues in the capitol to be cast of pure gold and silver, but he had even the ambition to assume divine honours. Unworthy as he was by his crimes, of the character and station of emperor, yet his immoderate anxiety for being thought superior to all mankind, influenced him to rank himself amongst the gods. Stiling himself the son of Pallas or Minerva, he particularly assumed the titles of OUR LORD and OUR GOD; and decreed that no person should presume to call him by any other name, either in writing or discourse. We learn from Pliny the younger, which he describes as a very strong foundation of complaint, that the way to the capitol was impassable, from the vast throngs of people who crowded to sacrifice to his statue; where a profusion of beasts was offered to HIM, who continually sacrificed men to himself.

THE cruelties of the emperor, which were more and more numerous, to which some personal affronts and injuries are to be added, induced Lucius Antonius, the governor of Upper Germany, to revolt against his authority; and, by the assistance of a powerful army which he commanded, to declare himself emperor. This insurrection, which gained considerable strength, was very formidable to Domitian, and created him much uneasiness; and the success of the enterprize was long doubtful, till, by a masterly stroke of Normandus, the general of Domitian, he surprised Antonius in the very critical moment when a sudden overflowing of the Rhine deprived him of the aid of his German auxiliaries, and thereby destroyed both him and his army. Historians assure us, that the news of this victory was conveyed to Rome, by supernatural means, on the very day when the battle was fought; which afforded much cause of surprise to the emperor and citizens.

His propensity to acts of cruelty rendered him more and more averse to literature, and consequently to learned men of all descriptions; who, about this time, were again banished from Rome and Italy, and particularly historians, the effects of whose writings he had the greatest reason to be afraid of. To record the just praises of illustrious persons, was a crime which he could never forgive; but the great Jewish historian, who received the caresses of his father and brother, still retained so much favour as to escape the effects of this general edict.

ABOUT two years before the end of this emperor's reign, the great historian, Josephus, concluded his famous work of "The Antiquities of the Jews," which has stood the test of  
time



time to the present day ; and contains a continued history from the creation of the world to the beginning of the last Jewish war, in which he himself had a share. When the circumstances under which it was wrote are considered, the necessity of his adapting it to the genius and temper of the Romans and Grecians must be admitted. This excellent work, which is written with wonderful art and eloquence, is taken from the books of the Old Testament ; but other facts are added which these books do not contain. It is certain, from the mollifying and disguising strokes of his pen, and the artificial turn which he was obliged to give to many passages, that he durst not always follow truth rigidly. Of his other works, our limits forbid us to enlarge ; but thus much of this famous monument of his industry, of which every literary person is expected to give some account, we could not refrain from relating. Soon afterwards, the emperor published a third decree against the philosophers and other learned persons both of Rome and Italy.

AMONGST other indications of his propensity to haughtiness and self-importance, his declaration on the accession of Titus to the empire ought to be noticed ; pronouncing daringly, “ that his father had left him part of the empire, but “ that the will had been altered.” Yet, amidst these oppressive and cruel actions, his timidity occasionally was discovered ; for he had long a presentiment, not only of the year and day, but even of the hour and the manner of his death, of which the Chaldæans, by their predictions, had advertised him in his youth. The cause of inquietude was therefore constantly fixed in his mind ; and the smallest reasons for suspicion gave him the utmost uneasiness. It was this apprehension, fond as he was of honour and pomp, which prevented him from accepting a very flattering instance from the senate, of their attachment to him, whether dictated by fear or any other passion ; the decree for which, was, “ That whenever he was “ exercising the office of consul, some knights, who were chosen “ by lot, should be clothed in purple robes, and armed with “ lances, and should accompany him in his marches amongst “ the serjeants.” For in proportion as the time which menaced his destruction was nearer, his jealousy and anxiety were more conspicuous ; so that he even caused the walls of the galleries, where he usually walked, to be ornamented with a precious stone which had the power of reflection, so that he might see whatever was doing behind him, in the manner of a mirror.

He was now continually tormented with dreadful and alarming omens, so as almost to drive him to desperation. The



lightnings and thunderings, which continued successively and almost constantly for eight months before his death, considerably affected him; but he was most of all astonished at the answer of Ascleterion, the astrologer, who had been accused of publishing predictions of the emperor's death. When he was brought before him to answer to the charge, he never attempted to deny it; and when Domitian demanded if he knew his own fortune, or the kind of death which he himself should die, he replied instantly, "That he should be devoured by dogs." Determined as the emperor was to disprove this, he caused him immediately to die, and strictly commanded that his body should be burned with the greatest care; but a furious tempest suddenly sprung up, while this business was effecting, which blew down the funeral pile, and dispersed the body, when some dogs instantly seized and devoured it before the fire had half consumed it.

His execution of Clemens, his relation, in the very year of his consulship, greatly promoted the tyrant's ruin. His only pretence was, that he had embraced Christianity. Domitilla, his wife, and his niece of the same name, were at the same time banished; and many of the Christians now suffered in the most cruel manner. It was about this time that St. John was thrown into a caldron of oil set on fire, from which he escaped without the least harm.

Every person was now suspected, and his own wife, Domitia, was dreaded amongst others. As he had accustomed himself, in aid to his memory, to insert the names of such persons as he had doomed to destruction in a particular book, which he carefully kept about him; it happened, accidentally, but very fortunately, that she got a sight of it, wherein, to her great surprise, she found her own name, with many of the emperor's friends. Among others, she also discovered the names of Stephanus his steward, and of Norbanus and Petronius, Præfects of the Prætorian bands; to whom she immediately shewed it, to induce them to dispatch Domitian with all possible expedition. With such convincing demonstrations, they had little need of persuasion to form a conspiracy for the security of themselves; and the day was speedily fixed for completing their design. Parthenius, the emperor's principal chamberlain, was engaged in the business; and Stephanus, who for several days had worn his hand in a scarf, under a pretence that he had received some hurt in it, engaged to undertake the management, as primary actor in this important affair.

When the hour was arrived, the apprehension of which had so long possessed his mind, he enquired of an attendant the precise time; who informed him that it was an hour later than  
the



the time, of which he had so awful a dread. At this time, according to Suetonius, Stephanus presented him with a memoir relative to a conspiracy which he pretended to discover, and then, as he was reading it, gave him a thrust with his poignard, which was concealed in the scarf; and at that instant, when he attempted to resist, the other conspirators rushed in, and, after seven wounds, terminated his career. But others say, that the emperor was so much elated, on hearing that the fatal hour was past, that he hastened to the bath to refresh his body; when Parthenius conducted him into a room where Stephanus was placed, for the purpose of making this pretended discovery, and asserting that Clemens was still alive, when, as Domitian was reading the list, he struck him in the groin, and the other conspirators, to complete the work, furiously followed the blow, and dispatched the impious tyrant, notwithstanding his pretended divinity.

THIS event took place on the 18th day of September, after a reign of 15 years and five days; by which the world was rid of a monster, in many respects more cruel and abandoned than Nero, of whom so many dreadful things have been related.

AMONGST men of learning who were banished by the third and last edict of Domitian for driving away all philosophers, astrologers, and mathematicians, was Epictetus, the celebrated stoic. About this time the renowned Quintilian published his famous treatise of rhetoric; and, besides the historian Josephus, whom we have so largely noticed, we also find the renowned magician, Apollonius Tyanæus, who ended his life in the year following. Martial the celebrated Epigrammatist, and Onkelos, the noted Chaldee paraphrast, were distinguished during this reign; and some say that Juvenal, the famous satirist, lived at this time.

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## C H A P. XXXV.

NERVA, *the Twelfth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 848. A.D. 96.]

THOUGH it might have been supposed, that there could have been but one opinion on the subject of Domitian's death, yet the soldiers, who had so sensibly experienced his



generosity, manifested a very strong disposition to revenge it, and insisted that the assassins should meet an exemplary punishment. But the general temper of the people, and the active indignation which was shewn by the senate against him, who caused all his statues to be taken down, and decreed that every inscription containing his name should be erased, prevented any ferment or confusion on the present occasion. They also ordered that his name should be expunged from the registers of fame, and that he should not have the honours of a public funeral, as the utmost contempt they could shew to his memory.

When the senate perceived the inclinations of the army, they resolved immediately to provide a successor, before that body could have any opportunity of taking it upon themselves, as had heretofore frequently happened. Accordingly they created Cocceius Nerva emperor, in which they were assisted by Petronius, the captain of the Prætorian guards, entirely on account of his singular honesty and generosity, who was also no less remarkable for his moderation and clemency. For he was neither of a Roman, nor even an Italian family; but, according to the general opinion, born in the island of Crete, so that the family of the Cæsars was extinct by the death of Domitian, who was the eleventh emperor, but the twelfth and last of the Cæsars. When he was elected to this dignity, he was about 64 years of age; and one of the first acts of his elevation was, the rescinding and annulling the odious decrees of his predecessor, but particularly in recalling from banishment the philosophers and learned men, whom he had driven out of Italy, and also the Jews and Christians which had been dispersed in the persecution. To all who had been thus oppressively treated, he restored whatever property he found about the palace, which belonged to them. He also caused to be educated many of the children of the poor at his own expence; and bestowed lands, and other property, as a support to persons of rank who had been reduced.

From his aversion to tyranny, of which he had witnessed so many dreadful effects, his government, probably, had too much of an opposite extreme; for, on his accession to the empire, he solemnly protested, "That no senator of Rome should be put to death by his direction," and he so strictly and religiously observed this sanction, that when two of them actually conspired against his life, he used no kind of severity against them. His conduct, however, was manly and undaunted; for he took them both to the public theatre, and there convinced them of his knowledge of the matter, by the following very extraordinary method. He there presented each



each of them with a sword, and demanded, in the presence of the whole assembly, “That” since they had shewn a dislike of his government, “they should experience the goodness of the weapons upon his body” in a manly way; for that he was resolved not to parry the blow, if they thought it necessary to deprive him of life.

By these, and some similar acts of clemency, the example of which is not to be commended, he was sometimes accused of unseasonable lenity, though it was usually softened by the more amiable character of benevolence. Yet, as soon as the murmurings of some of his subjects came to his knowledge, he was induced, immediately, to prevent the occasion of them in future; in order to which he made several good laws, and amongst others renewed that edict of Domitian which related to the castration of children, that had not fully produced the designed effect. He also regulated many other matters, which had great need of reformation. The gold and silver statues of his predecessor, which the senate had spared immediately after his death, he caused to be converted into money, and appropriated to better uses; nor would he ever suffer any to be erected to his own honour. Many of the rich robes and splendid furniture of the palace were also disposed of, and many of the unnecessary and unreasonable expences of the court restrained during his reign. So great also was his confidence in the goodness and sincerity of his own heart, that he often declared, “If he should quit the empire, and return to a private life, he was not conscious that he had done any thing to cause the least fear or apprehension from any man.”

ONE of the descendants of the family of Herod, whose posterity were rapidly falling into decay, had the good fortune to discover an immense treasure, which had been buried under an old house, and was the last remains of his patrimony; and as this was, by rigour of law, the property of the emperor, the prudent Atticus (for that was his name) was determined to prevent the officiousness of informers, by making an open confession of the fact with all its circumstances. Regardless of money, farther than was wanting for necessary purposes, Nerva refused to accept any part of it, and commanded the possessor to use it without scruple or hesitation; which he still expressed his unwillingness to do, alledging that the treasure was too considerable, and that as a subject he could scarcely find means how to use it. So much honesty and generosity of temper the emperor thought it his duty to equal; and therefore replied that as it was his own, he might endeavour to



abuse it. In what manner a considerable part of it was employed, we shall have occasion to relate hereafter.

BUT all this generosity could not protect him from enemies. Though one of his opponents had not only been pardoned, but accepted as his colleague in the consulship, and Calpurnius Crassus, with some others, had formed a conspiracy to destroy him; yet was he satisfied with banishing the most culpable, contrary to the inclinations of the senate, who wished to inflict a more rigorous punishment. The soldiers, as we have mentioned, were highly exasperated at the murder of their patron; and the Prætorian bands became very disorderly in their efforts to procure the punishment of the assassins. To a man of Nerva's disposition, whose kindness and benevolence to the good rendered him obnoxious to all vicious and profligate persons, this was a very trying situation; after some deliberation, unwilling as he was to give up his friends and those who had merited well of the people, he resolved to present himself to the mutinous soldiers, and, uncovering his breast, desired them to strike there rather than be guilty of such injustice. Remonstrances, indeed, were vain; and the emperor had the grating mortification to see them seize Petronius and Parthenius, by whose means principally he had been raised to this dignity, before his face, and to slay them in the most ignominious manner. After this, they even compelled the emperor to sanction and approve this sedition, in a speech which he was obliged to make to the people, wherein he thanked the cohorts for their fidelity.

YET this constraint, however reluctantly submitted to by the emperor, was at length productive of the most happy effects. Finding that he was declining in infirmities, as well as years, he considered that, in the present turbulent condition of the times, he could not do any thing so proper as to adopt a successor; for by this means he would obtain an assistant in the government, of which there was now evidently much need, and such as were dissatisfied might probably be appeased. Naturally as his own relations and friends, of which many were considerable, might hope for this dignity, he resolved to regard the public advantage only, by adopting some person of merit and integrity, as well as experience in public affairs. Hence he passed over all his own relations, and made choice of Ulpian Trajan, an utter stranger to his own family, and only known to the emperor for his wise and prudent government in Upper Germany; who was allowed to be the greatest and most deserving person of that age, and his adoption was accordingly submitted to by the soldiers, as well as others,  
who,



who, from that time, remained in perfect quietness and obedience.

THE arms and ensigns of the empire were immediately transmitted to him at Cologne, and in less than three months after he succeeded to the full possession of the Roman government; so that Nerva did not long live to enjoy the benefit of so judicious a choice, but, in consequence of a violent agitation of resentment against one of the senators, by which he unnaturally and violently strained his voice, and put his feeble body in much confusion and disorder, a fever immediately seized him, and terminated his life, after a short reign of one year, four months, and about nine days. He was now nearly 66 years of age; and had the honour of being deified by the senate, according to the ancient custom, and his body interred in the sepulchre of Augustus.

HE was the first of those five emperors, usually distinguished by the title of the "five good emperors," beginning with Nerva, and ending with the latter Antoninus, and continuing through a period of about 84 years, who carefully preserved the forms of civil administration; and not only delighted in the image of a just and well regulated liberty, but pleased themselves with the reflection that they were the only ministers of the laws of the empire, for the dispensing of which they were to be accountable. It may truly be said, by way of anticipation, in this place, that such princes deserved the honour of restoring the Roman government, if the people themselves had been capable of enjoying a rational freedom.

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## C H A P. XXXVI.

TRAJAN, *the Thirteenth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 850. A. D. 98.]

WHEN Nerva had paid the great debt of nature, his successor was still in Germany, administering the affairs of his government in that province with prudence and discretion. On receiving the information of Nerva's death, he



prepared to return speedily to Rome. Though of an Italian family, he was born at Seville in Spain; and at the time of his succeeding to the empire, was about 42 years of age, with a strong constitution both of body and mind, which was happily tempered with the animating vigour of youth, and the steady experience of riper years, and in every respect was fortunately prepared to engage in the greatest attempts, and noblest enterprizes. The renowned Plutarch, so well known as a philosopher and biographer, had been exercised to cultivate his mind; by whose wise instructions, to which his own attention and experience had been united, he pursued his ministration of the government with so much moderation and equity, that he secured the admiration and respect of all men.

On his accession to the empire, it is said that Plutarch addressed him in a very pathetic manner, by a congratulatory letter, in which he interested himself, as his tutor, in his future government of the empire; expressing his happiness, if he should persevere in his accustomed goodness, and the danger also of his falling off, as it would reflect ignominy upon himself. "The errors of the pupil," says he, "will be charged upon his instructor. Seneca is reproached for the enormities of Nero; and Socrates and Quintilian have not escaped censure for the misconduct of their respective scholars. If you follow my instructions, I will glory in having presumed to give them; but if you neglect what I offer, this letter will be my testimony that you have not erred through the counsel and authority of Plutarch."

AGREEABLE to this advice, and his former experienced conduct, he began with reforming several laws, which still needed regulation; for which purpose he assumed the office of Pontifex Maximus, which was highly agreeable to his disposition, and enabled him to proceed with much effect in the business of reformation. He was particularly severe upon informers and pettifoggers, who in former reigns had enriched themselves and impoverished or ruined their clients, by promoting private quarrels and dissensions. Pantomimes and farces he utterly forbid, and the ridiculous custom of keeping buffoons and mimics; all which he considered as contrary to that gravity and demeanour which ought to distinguish the Roman citizens. All advocates or pleaders were restrained from receiving any fees, or even promises, before a cause was pleaded; and all exorbitant expences, bribery and other corruptions, which had been usual in the election of magistrates, were particularly prohibited. He selected the most worthy and virtuous men for stations of honour and responsibility;  
and



and endeavoured to reclaim those whom he found to be otherwise by means of gentleness and clemency.

WHEN he first entered into the senate, he made a solemn and awful protestation, “That no good man, by his command, should suffer death or disgrace;” therein qualifying the declaration of Nerva, which was expressed too generally to consist with a judicious and happy government. He was very liberal to worthy men, and extended the bounty of his predecessor to the poor and indigent, in the numbers of poor children which he caused to be educated. His moderation and munificence were as remarkably as prudently tempered; he treated persons of all descriptions with courtesy and affability. Free from the tormenting passions of envy or hypocrisy, men of merit were most hospitably and familiarly entertained by him, whatever might be their rank; to whom also he frequently paid visits, and admitted them to private and unrestrained conversation. For so much condescension he was indeed blamed by some; but he replied, “That he treated his subjects in the same manner as he himself should wish to be treated by his prince, if he were a private person.”

THE confidence which he had in his own integrity is equally to be regarded. Upon giving the sword to Saburinus, the præfect of the Prætorian bands, according to custom on the accession of a new emperor, he addressed him in these extraordinary words, “Take this sword, and if I govern like a just prince, employ it in my service; but if I abuse the authority which is given me, then draw it against me.” It was also a maxim with him, as well as his predecessor, that he who prescribed laws should be the first to obey them. He had all the qualifications of a mighty emperor, and such a portion and measure of the noblest endowments and properties, that he may have been said to possess a transcendent temperature of all virtues.

HAPPY to embrace every probable means of benefiting his subjects, he increased the number of poor children which Nerva had caused to be educated at his own expence from 3000 to near 5000. For these, and many other worthy actions, by which he distinguished himself, he obtained the character of “Pater Patriæ, or Father of his Country;” and not content with this, the senate conferred upon him the new title of “Optimus,” which he valued more than all the honours he at any time acquired; because it related principally to his morality and piety, for which he was eminent, even to the highest degrees of superstition.

OF his public works, it has been observed, that they all bear the stamp of his genius; who was not more happy in his



his design and invention, than he was fortunate in his execution.

ANXIOUS to signalize himself in martial achievements, as well as to exercise prudently the affairs of civil government, he resolves to commence an expedition against the Dacians, a barbarous people on the north side of the river Danube, who had often been troublesome to the Romans in the time of Domitian. But Decebalus, their king, made a vigorous opposition, and a very severe and bloody war ensued, which was continued for a long time by the Dacians, who withstood all the efforts of Trajan; but he was forced at last to a general engagement, wherein the emperor displayed his skill and valour, by which he overthrew them with great slaughter, at the expence of many valiant soldiers of the Romans, so that they even wanted linen to bind up their wounds. But the compassionate Trajan, without hesitation, tore his own robes to supply the defect, as far as he could; and ordered altars to be speedily erected for those who died honourably, commanding sacrifices to be offered up yearly to their memory.

HAVING thus obtained a complete victory over this restless and dissatisfied people, who, from the timid and pusillanimous conduct of Domitian, had been encouraged in their depredations, the emperor lost no time in pushing forward his success; by which means Decebalus was compelled to petition for peace, and to submit to whatever humiliating articles and conditions might be proposed. On this occasion he prostrated himself solemnly to the earth, and publicly acknowledged himself as his vassal; and, for this conclusion of the war, he had a stately triumph, which continued many days.

BUT notwithstanding this submission to a conquering power, the mildness and forbearance of Trajan were grossly abused in about two years, by the revolt of Decebalus. Subjection and servitude was a condition, though little more than nominal only, which his haughty spirit, till now un subdued, could not brook; and accordingly he made every possible preparation to shake off that submission and state of vassalage to which he had been reduced. Trajan determined upon this occasion to give a specimen of his power and grandeur; and, in a very short time, such were the vigilance and activity of his measures, he built a bridge over the spacious river Danube, over which he transported his forces, the most stately and magnificent in the world. It consisted of twenty piers; each of which was 60 feet thick; each of the arches being 170 feet broad, and 150 feet high, besides the foundation on which the piers were erected, which made the whole length to be more than 4600 feet. The whole was constructed with square stones



stones of a wonderful beauty, and proves the greatness and opulence of the Roman empire, and the wonderful genius of this emperor, which was not to be limited by the boldest and most difficult attempts. Astonishing as were the obstacles which obviously occurred, particularly in securing so vast a foundation in a river which was extremely deep, and in a stream surprizingly rapid, together with a bottom very unfavourable, he subdued them all, and accomplished his design.

THE caution of Decebalus, from the experience he had obtained in considering the cause of his former defeat, induced him, at this time, in an earlier part of the contest, to exercise his skill in avoiding an engagement, which partly contributed to this resolution of the emperor. He also practised various stratagems to harass the enemy, in many of which he was very successful; and Trajan himself was, at one time, in danger of being slain or made prisoner, as Longinus, one of his generals, actually fell into his hands. He now proceeded to threaten the emperor, and declared, if terms of peace were not immediately granted him, that he would kill this general; but Trajan replied, that peace or war could not possibly depend upon the life of one man, and the death of Longinus, which on his part was voluntary, (but from what cause we are not informed) gave new vigour to the emperor's operations.

WHEN the stately fabric, over which he designed to conduct his forces, was completed, he prosecuted the war without intermission, and shared with his soldiers the fatigues of the campaign. Such an example, added to his constant encouragement, inspired them with zeal and emulation to outvie each other in the pursuit of their duty. By this persevering and determined conduct, notwithstanding the country was very extensive and but little cultivated, and the inhabitants ferocious and hardy, he subdued this daring and rebellious people; and having reduced their king Decebalus to the utmost distress and extremity, when he found himself surrounded on every side, to avoid falling into the hands of his conqueror, he slew himself. But his head was sent to Rome as a trophy, by which the fate of the war was demonstrated; and the whole country of Dacia, which was very extensive, and now forms a very considerable part of Turkey in Europe, was added to the Roman empire, and became a regular province. In this expedition he discovered much treasure; and after it was conquered, he caused many cities and towns to be built in it, which he supplied with colonies from other parts.

By this success, as the empire was advanced to a still higher degree of splendor than it had ever before acquired, ambassadors from every part were commissioned to congratulate  
Trajan



Trajan on the occasion, and to bespeak his friendship; and it is remarkable that the most distant nations, when they heard of his astonishing valour, courted his alliance. After saying that he triumphed, on his return to Rome, in the most wonderful and unprecedented manner, his thirst for new honours and new conquests induced him to meditate an expedition into the East against the Parthians and Armenians. His pretence for this was, that the king of the latter people had received his crown from the hands of the Parthian king, whom he therefore acknowledged as his superior; which was contrary to the stipulations formerly made, when the Parthians were rendered tributary to the Romans, and a breach of the conditions on which that province was held.

IN this expedition, the emperor was equally victorious and successful as he had ever been. After conquering the kingdom of Armenia, and reducing the whole country into a Roman province, he proceeded with the same good fortune to Parthia and Mesopotamia, both of which he subdued. The senate, upon hearing successively of his numerous victories, commanded the most distinguished sacrifices to their gods; conferring new honours and new titles, wherewith to salute him on his return to Italy.

NOT yet satisfied with the honours he had gained, his ardent passion for military fame was no way abated, after he had reigned with wonderful good fortune for sixteen years.

HAVING dedicated a magnificent palace in Rome, where a stately column might be erected in honour of all his acts, he undertook a second expedition into the East, to settle some matters amongst the Parthians, and from thence proposed to march to other nations. He now, after much difficulty, but with no less bravery, passed the river Euphrates; and, advancing forward with great courage, subdued many cities and castles, and amongst others the great city of Arbela, in Assyria, where Alexander conquered king Darius. Continuing his successful progress, he was equally fortunate in other countries where the Roman arms had never yet extended. After a very inconsiderable opposition, he approached the city of Babylon, which he subdued by force, with all its territories; and the whole rich and noble countries of Chaldæa and Assyria submitted to him.

HERE he proposed to unite the Tigris and Euphrates by a canal, in order to convey more easily his vessels and appendages; but he found the former was so much above the level of the latter, that he was obliged to mount his vessels upon land carriages, and by that means convey them to the Tigris. Having thence advanced as far as Ctesiphon, which he took,  
he



he thereby opened a passage into Persia; whither he proceeded to make new conquests and gain new dominions, to the great surprize and astonishment of all nations.

DESIROUS of repofing himself for some time, he came into Syria, and took up his quarters in the city of Antioch. Here he was visited by a splendid concourse of kings and ambassadors, and constantly surrounded by a glorious train of crowned heads; but his ambition was greatly abated by a most prodigious and astonishing earthquake, which was very extensive in its effects, though it was most alarming and destructive in Syria. Many cities were swallowed up by it, and mountains and hills sunk to a level; in some places rivers were totally lost, and in others waters and fountains gushed out, where before they were unknown. Almost all the palaces and buildings in Antioch were demolished, and the emperor himself had a narrow escape by leaping out of a window.

BUT Trajan, as soon as he had refreshed his troops, pursued his victories. Having passed down the river Tigris into the Persian Gulf, he came into the Oriental Ocean; and there, proposing to emulate the actions of Alexander, he pretended to make a conquest of the Indies. Great as were his conquests, he boasted of still greater, and sent to Rome an account of several nations he had subdued, whose names even were unknown to the senate. Yet since most of his conquests had been produced more from terror and by submission, than victory in battle, and as their rapid succession admitted not of establishing any settled government, as Roman provinces, most of them revolted on the removal of his army, and the small garrisons which he left behind were mostly sacrificed to the resentment of the native inhabitants. Mortifying as the necessity of his return made it, he soon recovered most of them by extraordinary vigour and industry; and particularly he displaced the Parthian king, that he might have the honour of giving a head to that nation.

THESE things being accomplished, he proceeded to Arabia, where, in advancing to besiege one of its principal towns, the most dreadful storms of lightning and thunder, with hail and wind, and many uncommon signs in the clouds, overtook the Roman forces, just as they were advancing to the walls. In this attack was Trajan in person, but in disguise; and suffering a repulse, he was, at this time, in imminent danger. Their provisions also were rendered nauseous; and he found it necessary to retreat and abandon the siege.

THE senate, about this time, invited him home to enjoy a solemn triumph, which they had prepared for him; on which he left Adrian, to command the army then in Syria, and commenced



menced his journey towards Italy. About this time he was seized with a distemper, which he himself attributed to poison; and having reached the province of Cilicia in lesser Asia, he was so very weak and declining, and his complaint increased so fast, that he ordered himself to be conveyed to the city of Seleucia, where he died within a few days, after a reign of 19 years, 6 months, and 15 days.

In the history of the imperial transactions under Trajan, we have found it advisable to depart from our usual mode; and have therefore connected the history of his wars alone, without considering the other affairs of this extensive empire. But we cannot close the reign of this emperor, without observing briefly, that besides his ambition, which was immeasurably exorbitant, as we have just related, he had a strong propensity to luxury and women; yet was he not addicted to disorder or extravagance in the pursuit of the one, or disposed to commit violence or compulsion in attaining the other.

We have observed, that he was also extremely superstitious, according to the religion of paganism in those days; which was unhappily productive of a dreadful persecution against the Christians, wherein many eminent champions of its faith were victims to the zeal of the emperor and his governors, as it continued with more or less violence, but without a total intermission, for about fifteen years.

For his numerous severities against the Christians many have attributed the misfortunes which befel the Romans to the divine displeasure. Besides the dreadful earthquakes which happened in Syria, and especially in Antioch, three cities were entirely swallowed up in Galatia, and the Pantheon in Rome was consumed by lightning. To the same extraordinary causes may be assigned the occasion of his repulse in Arabia, as necessary to eclipse his glory, and mortify his ambition.

BUT the Roman empire did not barely suffer by these supernatural visitations; for about this time, the Jews, who were dispersed in various parts, planned a rebellion against the power and subjection of the emperor. To this they encouraged themselves, partly by his absence on his eastern expeditions, and more from the terrible earthquakes which, they supposed, were manifest indications of the ruin of the Roman greatness. Their utmost malice was consequently exercised, and incredible slaughters were made upon Romans and Greeks of all ranks and degrees. The Roman province of Cyrene in Africa, where the dark conspiracy first broke out, and the island of Cyprus, were almost desolated of inhabitants; and the country of Egypt became a dreadful scene of carnage.

In



In the province of Cyrene alone 220,000 persons perished, and in Cyprus 240,000; and so barbarous and savage were their dispositions, that they even besmeared themselves with the blood of the unhappy victims, wore their skins, or cast them to wild beasts, and exercised every kind of torment.

No sooner was the emperor acquainted with these enormities, than he issued orders to exterminate such wretches, as unfit for human society. This was productive of many cruel and bloody hostilities; and this obstinate and rebellious people, detested by men for their abominable cruelties, and abandoned of God, were treated as the pests and venom of mankind, and like beasts destroyed, in numbers almost incredible, by every species of death. Suspicious that the Jews in Mesopotamia might be tinctured with the furious spirit of those in Cyrene and Cyprus, he banished all the Jews from that country; and vast numbers of them died in other places by acts of hostility. To brand the Jews with perpetual infamy, an edict was issued, "That no Jew, even if driven by tempests  
"to the island of Cyprus, shall presume to set his foot upon  
"land, on pain of immediate execution; being already condemned by his very appearance on that soil, which had been  
"tainted with the deadly venom of his countrymen."

We have only to add, in closing the history of this reign, that Trajan was a prince of the most shining virtues, and the most matchless monarch in the pagan world; but his severities against the harmless Christians unfortunately stained his memory, and stamped it with an indelible stigma to the latest posterity. His death, which happened on the 8th day of August, under the consulships of Niger and Apronianus, was in the 63d year of his age. The younger Pliny was a great favourite of this emperor, who made him governor of Pontus and Bithynia; by whose mild representation of the conduct of the Christians, the violence of the persecution was somewhat abated, but not wholly terminated, about the time of Trajan's second expedition against the Dacians.

WHEN his ashes were conveyed to Rome, they were placed with great solemnity on the top of a pillar of very curious workmanship, representing the particulars of all his exploits. This was 140 feet high. He was deified after the Roman custom; and they instituted new games to his honour, which continued in Rome for many ages, and were distinguished by the name of Parthica.

Of learned men during the reign of Trajan, we meet with the names of the renowned Plutarch, whose lives of philosophers, and other works have handed down his name, as honourable, to posterity. Cornelius Tacitus, the elegant historian,  
rian,



rian, with Aulus Gellius, and the renowned Martial, were also famous during this reign; besides some respectable and distinguished writers among the Christians.

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## C H A P. XXXVII.

ADRIAN, *the Fourteenth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 869. A. D. 117.]

WE have already noticed that Adrian was left at Antioch, as commander of the army, and that Trajan died at Seleucia, in his journey towards Rome. This death was for some time concealed, till Ælius Adrianus, who was his nephew, could sound the disposition of his army, and Plotina, the emperor's widow, did that of the nobility of Rome. To promote her design, she produced a forged instrument, which imported, that Trajan, who had no issue, had adopted Adrian for his son and successor; and as this was a very natural artifice, she succeeded in her design. The army having immediately sworn obedience to Adrian, the senate and people of Rome very soon after, in consideration of his abilities and relation to Trajan, acknowledged him as emperor.

THE disposition of Adrian, fatiated perhaps with the wild projects of his relation and predecessor in thirsting after useless and unprofitable conquests, which he plainly saw to be untenable, or for which it was manifest great expence must be incurred, wisely determined, immediately on his accession, to bound the empire eastward by the river Euphrates. A modern writer has thus contrasted the disposition of these two emperors: “The martial and ambitious spirit of Trajan, “formed a very singular contrast with the moderation of his “successor; but the restless activity of the latter was equally “remarkable, whose life was almost a perpetual journey. “Possessing the various talents of the soldier, the statesman, “and the scholar, he gratified his curiosity in the discharge “of his duty. Careless of the difference of seasons and climates, he marched on foot, and bare-headed, over the snows



“ of Caledonia and the sultry plains of Upper Egypt; nor  
“ was there a province of the empire, which, in the course of  
“ his reign, was not honoured with his presence.”

THIS emperor, as well as his predecessor, was born in Spain; and when he came to the empire was about 40 years of age. He was of a most retentive memory, and well skilled, not only in the profession of arms, but in every species of learning. He composed excellently both in prose and verse; was an excellent orator, physician, and mathematician; in music he excelled, and was equal to the first masters in drawings and paintings. All sorts of learned men were encouraged by him, with whose conversation he was extremely delighted; and though he was almost surrounded with philosophers, astronomers, poets, orators, grammarians, musicians, geometricians, architects, painters, and statuaries, there were very few of them whom he did not surpass in their own way.

His condescension to the meanest of his subjects, if they were men of reputation, was extraordinary; whom he often visited, but especially if they were sick, and treated with the utmost familiarity. Nothing gave him so much offence as those who envied him this pleasure, under pretence of its inconsistency with the dignity of an emperor. All injuries preceding his advancement to the empire were pardoned; and such was his clemency, that the only punishment which he ordered for a man, who ran madly upon him with a sword, was to order him a physician to cure his frenzy.

As he approached towards Rome, in his journey from Syria, to take possession of the imperial throne, he heard that a solemn triumph was decreed for him; but he wholly refused this honour, and ordered that it should be given to the image of Trajan, who by this means triumphed, which no other emperor did, after his death. And when he entered into the senate, soon after his arrival, he took an oath never to punish a senator, but by the sentence of the senate. As an instance of his wonderful kindness and generosity, he cancelled all the debts which were owing to the public treasury from various persons; and destroyed the records and securities of them, that they might never afterwards be demanded.

He had not been very long in Rome, when the warlike Dacians, with the Sarmatians and Alani, renewed their hostilities against the Roman territories; but on his approaching them, they were terrified by the very character only of the lieutenant of Trajan, which induced them to a submission. On this occasion he caused the very bridge of his predecessor, which he had raised to transport his armies over the Danube  
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against these people, to be broken down; as it now served to assist these free-booters in their short-incursions, and enabled them more severely to harass the neighbouring nations.

A SHORT time after his return to Rome he formed the resolution of visiting the whole empire; and immediately prepared, with a splendid retinue and a sufficient guard, to enter Gaul, from whence he passed into Germany, and thence into Britain. Here he caused the mighty wall, which bore his name, to be raised, which extended from the river Eden, in Cumberland, to the Tine in Northumberland, over a space of 80 miles, to prevent the incursions of the wilder Britons. From thence, returning through Gaul, he passed into Spain, of which country he was a native; and after wintering there, and visiting some other parts of his dominions, to reform any abuses or make any improvements which might appear necessary, he again returned to Rome. He soon afterwards appointed that the inhabitants of higher Germany should be favoured with a king, in which they expressed the greatest satisfaction.

AFTER some time the Parthians revolted, which occasioned him to proceed to the eastern parts of the empire, where he resolved to prosecute the war in person; but this alarmed the enemy, and induced them to sue for peace, which they obtained. He now proceeded on his travels through the lesser Asia and Syria, from whence he went to the famous city of Athens, where he continued for some time.

RETURNING once more to Rome, he abolished the impious custom of the Pagans, of offering human sacrifices; and made many regulations for the good of the empire. At this time, as in every other part of the empire which he visited, many public works were erected in Rome under his immediate inspection; for as he was himself an artist, so he loved the arts, because they contributed to the glory of the monarch. After continuing near three years, he went over into Africa, to the great joy of its inhabitants; whose presence was not only extremely delightful, but more so as it was accompanied with plentiful showers of rain, which for many years they had wanted. On leaving Carthage, his stay was short at Rome; for, proceeding into Greece, he from thence passed over into lesser Asia and Syria. Hither he caused, by messengers and letters, all the kings and governors in those parts to be assembled; on which occasion he voluntarily sent the daughter of the king of Parthia, whom Trajan had made prisoner, to accompany the invitation of that king amongst others, which generosity induced many others to comply with his wishes. The courtesy and civility with which he received them, was  
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the common topic of conversation amongst the courts of Asia; and gave much anxiety and concern to those who had neglected the opportunity.

WHEN this magnificent entertainment was completed, he finishes his survey of Syria, enters Judæa and Palestine, and from thence goes to Arabia. From thence he passed into Egypt, where he continued for almost two years; at which time the poor Christians experienced his zeal for Paganism, in his persecution of them. When he came into Greece, after some continuance at Athens, he terminated his peregrinations, by returning to Rome in the nineteenth year of his reign for the sixth and last time; which was extremely grateful to the people, and productive of general benefit. His diligence in administering the affairs of government was unabated; many new laws and ordinances were made; and, being now about 60 years of age, he resolves to adopt a successor, chusing Lucius Commodus, whose virtues and merits he strongly insisted on in various consultations, contrary to the advice of his council. But he died about two years after, and then selected Titus Antoninus, a person of eminence, afterwards surnamed Pius, with the entire approbation of the senate and principal people of Rome; whom he obliged also to adopt two others, who afterwards became joint emperors, until the death of one of them.

ABOUT the time that he was in Syria, he caused that edict to be prepared by his famous lawyer, Salvius Julianus, which was afterwards published under the name of "The perpetual Edict;" and contained rules for all succeeding prætors and governors of provinces, so that justice might be administered uniformly throughout the empire.

HE soon after caused the city of Jerusalem to be rebuilt at a vast expence; and as the Jews were zealous in their assistance, which contributed to raise their expectations, it proceeded with astonishing expedition. But when the emperor put a Roman colony into it, and built a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, in the room of the temple of God, the mischiefs it occasioned were serious and lamentable. It is also said, that they were prohibited the use of circumcision; and that these two causes united to provoke them to a general rebellion.

IT is certain, that this broke out soon after the emperor left Egypt and the Eastern parts; and that, by means of an impostor, the Jews of all nations joined the sedition. Their ravages and plunders were extremely great; which induced the governor of Judæa, with a small number of auxiliary forces, to march out against them, destroying all these desperate rebels without distinction. But he found himself unable  
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to quell the disturbance, as their numbers increased so prodigiously in a short time, from the hopes of deliverance, that the emperor's best troops and most skilful commanders were soon necessary. The general of this army was Julius Severus, at that time Governor of Britain; who, by a successful manœuvre, in dividing their united forces, obtained several bloody victories, and in the first year of the war, besieged, demolished, and burnt the new city of Jerusalem, which was so lately rebuilt.

THE town of Bether, to which vast numbers of Jews had retired, as their last refuge, being exceedingly strong, supported a long siege from the Roman army. Obstinate and persevering in their rebellion, they suffered the most dreadful calamities of hunger and thirst; which at last ended in a very terrible slaughter, the most deplorable which ever befel them, except in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. According to their own accounts, "the horses waded in blood to the nostrils; 400,000 were slain, and Adrian walled a vineyard of sixteen miles in compass with dead bodies."

AFTER many other violent struggles, the Jewish war ended in the third year from its commencement, at the expence of much blood to the Romans. Determined to prevent every future rebellion of the Jews, the emperor's severity was now extreme; and it did not come to its termination, till fifty of their strongest cities had been demolished, and 985 of their best towns destroyed, with the slaughter of 580,000 men in several battles and skirmishes, besides an infinite number of others who perished by famine, fire, and diseases. Those who survived this second ruin of their nation were sold in incredible numbers, of all ages and sexes, like dogs and horses, in the public markets; others were transported into Egypt and various countries, of whom some perished by shipwreck, some by famine, and many were slain like beasts by the Pagans.

WHEN Adrian, in the following year, rebuilt Jerusalem, he determined that it should neither have the name it formerly had, nor be possessed by any other than Romans and foreigners. Hence he called it *Ælia Capitolina*, by which it was known for several ages. In this new city, Mount Calvary was included within the walls; but all the southern parts of the old city, comprehending Mount Sion and the place of the temple, were excluded, and left desolate. A Roman theatre was also erected; in which the very stones of the temple were applied. Many other indignities were likewise shewn to the memory of the Jews, as monuments of Pagan superstition; which, in several respects, had an equal enmity to the Christians, against whom



whom the persecution continued, with very little intermission, through the greatest part of his reign, though not with equal violence.

It must not be dissembled, that, with all his virtues, this emperor had many vices and imperfections. In the midst of all his excellencies, he was remarkable for pride and vanity, with a mixture of cruelty and revenge, especially towards the latter part of his reign. To flatterers and parasites, he too much lent an ear; and in the arts of dissimulation, though they did not so generally produce the evils of that vice in preceding reigns, he was very thoroughly conversant. But it must remain a blot upon his memory, that he put to death four consular men, who were his personal enemies; and his concluding conduct, probably excited by a tedious illness, rendered him very peevish and cruel, so that it became doubtful, after his death, whether the senate should decree him a place amongst the gods, which terminated in his favour by the intercessions of his successor.

To form some judgment of the military forces of Adrian, which was continued by succeeding emperors, the peace establishment was thirty legions, of which three were deemed fully sufficient to be kept in Britain. But when the number which each of these legions contained is considered, as forming a distinct body of 6831 Romans, besides attendant auxiliaries, as we learn from authors, it may not, perhaps, be overrating such a body to set them down at 12,500 men; and, upon this estimate, Great Britain must have supported 37,500 Roman soldiers, and the whole standing force amounted to 375,000 men for the defence of the empire.

ADRIAN, for some time before his death, became insupportable to himself, and earnestly desired that some person would dispatch him. His adopted successor, to his great honour, endeavoured to persuade the emperor to support life as long as possible, and strictly charged that none of his domestics should be guilty of so much impiety. He complained what a miserable thing it was to seek death, and not be able to find it. He now caused himself to be removed to Baia, where his disorder so much increased as to affect his understanding; upon which he disregarded all regimen, and his death proportionably hastened, to terminate his sufferings. This happened on the 10th of July, in the 62d year of his age, after a reign of 20 years and eleven months.

To the memorable names of writers who flourished in the time of Trajan, of whom several remained during this reign, we may add the names of Appian, Suetonius, and Pausanias, &c. historians. In this reign also flourished the famous Justin



Martyr among the christians, who lived near thirty years after the death of this emperor; an eminent champion of that despised people, particularly in his distinguished opposition to the Jews, with whom they were but too frequently confounded.

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C H A P. XXXVIII.

ANTONINUS PIUS, *the Fifteenth* ROMAN EMPEROR.

[ANN. ROM. 890. A. D. 138.]

**W**HEN Adrian, in appointing a successor to the empire, after the death of Lucius, made choice of Titus Antoninus, he therein apparently determined to deserve the thanks of posterity, by placing a person of the most exalted merit on the imperial throne. At the same time he had secured the reversion to two others, whose juvenile years gave him reason to expect that they might naturally succeed him, and whose discernment taught him to hope that they would also become ornaments to that dignity. Of Antoninus it must be observed, that he had all the qualifications of an amiable prince; and was so entirely free from all vices, that he greatly exceeded the very best of his predecessors. He was extremely affable, easy, and pleasant to all men. It is not sufficient to say, that he was compared to Numa, the second king of Rome, though he was equally distinguished for a love of religion, justice, and peace; for Numa had only to govern a few neighbouring villages, and prevent them from committing depredations on each other, but Antoninus diffused tranquility and good order over the greatest part of the earth.

HE was born at Nîmes in the province of Gaul, and when he came to the empire was about 50 years of age. In his administration of public justice, he was rigidly tenacious of the principles of rectitude, and would suffer no bribes, favours, or gratitude to be bestowed on any of his servants by such as had occasion to apply to him; and to prevent, as much as might be, the very possibility of it, he commonly gave audience to all petitioners in person. Yet was he compassionate



to those criminals, who had offended against the laws, and been condemned by them, whenever he could discover any traces of virtue to give hopes of amendment.

ONE of his first objects was, to endeavour to appease the minds of the people, and induce them to forget the designs of Adrian, which he attributed to the effects of his distemper; first beginning with the restoration of those persons to liberty, who, it was said, had been marked out by Adrian for execution, and declaring as his reason, that Adrian, if he had recovered, would have done the same. He obtained his desire, though with much opposition, that he should also be ranked amongst the gods, according to the Pagan manner.

HE now enquired into the character and merits of the provincial governors; and selected those only whom he found to be men of strict justice and integrity. Equally vigilant and attentive in government as his predecessor, he was entirely opposite to him in relation to his travels; for he determined never to depart from the city, except for the purpose of rural recreations.

Soon after his accession to the empire, he married his daughter to his adopted successor, Marcus Aurelius, and gave him the title of Cæsar. The empress Faustina died in the third year of his reign; to whose memory the senate conferred every honour, though a very bad woman, entirely from a grateful respect to the emperor. He provided for the maintenance and education of certain young children, whom he ordered to be called Faustina's children, to endear her memory; and, in the following year, instituted new games in honour of Adrian, which were to be solemnized every five years. In about six years more, the grand secular games were celebrated, on concluding the ninth century from the foundation of Rome; which usually took place only once in 100 years, but had been celebrated under Domitian out of the regular order. The year following, when he had completed the tenth year of his reign, he celebrated his decennalia with much ceremony and splendor.

TOWARDS the close of his reign, which is not remarkable for a great variety of incidents, he renewed some laws against adulterers; and extended the same punishments to husbands as he did to their wives. Herein we may discover a striking contrast between this emperor and his predecessor; for no less remarkable was the gentle repose of the former, than the restless activity of the latter, especially from their immediate succession. He was very little employed in war; and the few expeditions which he had in the beginning of his reign acquir-



ed him a sufficient reputation to govern the world afterwards without bloodshed.

OF these we shall notice, on the authority of Pausanias, the successful expedition against the wandering Moors, who were driven into the solitudes of Mount Atlas; and also another against the Brigantes of Britain, who had invaded the Roman provinces there.

THE Christians, for the most part, enjoyed a comfortable repose during this reign; so that very early the celebrated Justin Martyr settled in Rome, after several journeys and voyages, where he kept a sort of school for the benefit of the gospels, and made many converts. When they were persecuted more than ten years after, upon the false charges from some of the more zealous Pagans, which the standing laws of the empire and the particular edicts of former emperors permitted; he vindicated their cause to the emperor so effectually, that Antoninus caused a favourable edict to be published, which afterwards secured to them the rights of peaceable citizens.

IN this reign we meet with an account of the famous astronomer Phlegon, who, in the third year of Antoninus, completed his calculation of the Olympiads; where he notices particularly the miraculous eclipse of the sun which happened at the passion of the Messiah. Not long before the celebration of the grand secular games, the renowned historian, Appian, finished his Roman history; of which a considerable part still remains.

WE now meet with the names of Ptolemy, the geographer, with the historians Justin and Arrian. Galen, the physician, began to flourish under the reign of this mild and humane prince; to which might be added many renowned writers among the Christians, whose works do honour to the cause in which they were embarked.

AFTER a long course of prosperity, Antoninus was seized with a violent fever; and, conscious of the approach of his dissolution, he confirmed his adoption of Marcus Aurelius, his son in law, before a numerous concourse of friends, the captains of his guards, and his principal officers, whom he had caused to be assembled for that purpose. He soon after died, universally lamented in the city and empire, on the 7th day of March, at the age of 73, after a reign of 22 years, 7 months, and 26 days.



## C H A P. XXXIX.

ANTONINUS PHILOSOPHUS, *the Sixteenth* ROMAN EMPEROR

[ANN. ROM. 913. A. D. 161.]

FROM the respect and veneration which the Romans had now conceived for the name of Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, who was the elder of the two adopted sons of Titus, by command of Adrian, took the name of his predecessor. The senate immediately admitted him as emperor, and he took his adopted brother, Lucius Verus, as his associate and equal in the empire; which was a novel sight to the Romans, who had so very often shed their best blood in chusing one master, and now without difficulty saw themselves governed by two sovereigns at once. Of the latter, it may suffice at present to observe that he was the son of Lucius Commodus, whom Adrian had, in the first place, adopted his successor, but died before that emperor. Both these adopted sons exerted themselves to pay every possible respect to the memory of Adrian; pronouncing public orations at his funeral, which was solemnized with extraordinary pomp and splendor, for whom also a magnificent pillar was erected.

WHEN Antoninus succeeded to the empire, he was about 40 years of age; the son of Annius Verus, of an ancient and illustrious family, which claimed its original from Numa. He had embraced the rigid system of the Stoic philosophers, when he was only twelve years of age, and was distinguished by the name of Philosophus, that he might not be confounded with his predecessor. His justice and piety were truly eminent; and his care and penetration were not less celebrated; and so firmly did he attach himself to his sect, that he practised many of their severities, and preserved such a tranquillity of mind as never to change his countenance either with joy or sorrow. Yet was there a mildness in his character, which has been considered as the only defective part of it, though it was the most amiable; nor could all the rigid discipline of his sect wholly eradicate it.



His goodness of heart was frequently too powerful for the judgment and excellence of his understanding; and exposed him to the deceptions of artful and designing persons, who, under a pretence of philosophic sanctity, insinuated themselves into the emperor's favour, and thereby accumulated riches and honours at the very time when they affected to despise them.

When governments are corrupted through the bad administration of successive princes, it requires the rigid correction of many reformers to restore them to a settled condition. Notwithstanding the virtuous endeavours of a Nerva, a Trajan, an Adrian, and even of an Antoninus Pius, some faults were still to be found in the laws of the empire; for as the abuses of a government are usually gradual, so is commonly their reformation. Such laws, therefore, as were still wanting, or imperfectly executed, he caused to be put in force for these salutary ends; and he shewed so much respect to the senate, that he remitted many causes to their judgment, as a final sentence. Being fully satisfied that the safety of an empire depended on a wise and honest council, he always consulted the most intelligent persons in matters of importance. He considered every class and degree of mankind as entitled to his regard; but his utmost pleasure consisting in relieving the distresses of the poor, and succouring the oppressed, they never had recourse to him in vain. Strictly tenacious of his word, he despised those maxims which tend to establish, that a prince should be directed solely by convenience and interest.

AFTER mentioning that in the first year Commodus was born, who succeeded Marcus Antoninus in the empire, many misfortunes befel the Romans in the succeeding year, which many attributed to the violent persecution which then broke out against the Christians; for as this emperor was remarkable for his attachment to truth, he was no less so for his Pagan superstition. At this time great part of the city was overwhelmed by an inundation of the Tiber, by which many people and a vast number of cattle perished, and the country was entirely ruined. Hence ensued a grievous famine; which was farther rendered more distressing by earthquakes, burning of cities, and a general infection of the air that produced infinite swarms of insects which wasted all that the floods had not reached.

To add to these calamities, the empire was threatened with invasions and tumults from every quarter. Not only the Parthians, under their king Vologesus, surprized the Roman legions in Armenia, and cut them to pieces, but the Catti also invaded Germany and Rhetia, where they destroyed all by  
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fire and sword. The Britons also manifested the strongest disposition to revolt against the power of the Roman government. So many objects pressing on at once, induced them to regard the Parthian rebellion as the most important; and Lucius Verus, one of the emperors, was judged expedient to command the expedition for reducing them to obedience. Antoninus accompanied him part of the way, and was careful in providing many wise and able men to attend him; probably with a view to secure his conduct, and at the same time to restrain his vices, for which he discovered too much propensity.

BUT these precautions did not prevent Verus from pursuing his pleasures abroad, much more than was consistent with the interest of the war he was engaged in; and Antoninus, being acquainted with his conduct, judging that marriage might be a means of reforming him, came with his daughter Lucilla as far as Brundisium, from whence he sent her into Syria, to be married to him. Verus came as far as Ephesus, where he expected to meet Antoninus, in company with his designed empress, to prevent, as he supposed, the knowledge of his disorderly conduct from reaching his ears; soon after his marriage at Antioch he returned to the army with Lucilla, whose loose life and conversation were extremely agreeable to her husband's, and in conformity to the example of her mother Faustina.

So successfully did the lieutenants of Verus conduct the war against the Parthians, notwithstanding the degeneracy of their emperor and general, that they routed their king, took several of their principal towns, burnt and plundered their famous cities of Babylon and Ctesiphon, and demolished the magnificent palace of the Parthians. But these victorious achievements, in which Verus had little share, being principally engaged in continued debaucheries, acquired him a triumph on his return to Rome. Yet is it to be lamented, that, after his forces had effectually conquered and defeated armies of 400,000 men, they should be reduced to the necessity of contending, on their return home, with sickness and famine, which destroyed more than half their numbers. A more melancholy consequence still ensued; for his army carried the plague from the temple of Apollo, at Seleucia, which they plundered, into every province through which he passed; and the infection spread so generally through Italy and other parts of the Roman empire, that vast multitudes of people of all ranks and qualities were the victims of this dreadful malady. Other deplorable effects of earthquakes, famines, inundations, and insects, also fell on the people of Italy and other provinces.



DURING the absence of Verus in the East, Antoninus exercised himself assiduously in quieting the other parts of the empire, and applied himself to many regulations, particularly in his choice of wise governors and Magistrates. But the miseries and calamities which have just been mentioned, required all the wisdom and judgment of the emperor to prevent still more alarming effects; as the barbarous nations took advantage from these misfortunes, to make irruptions and inroads even into Italy itself. Every superstition, which the Pagan religion afforded, was resorted to with the utmost zeal, to put a stop to the threatened dangers; so that Pagan priests were sent for from every part to dispatch the vast number of sacrifices, which were vowed and offered upon this occasion.

He then marched against the Marcomanni and Quadi, inhabitants of Germany, taking Verus with him to restrain, in some degree, his numerous irregularities; and having arrived at the scene of action, a battle ensued, in which the Marcomanni were driven from their trenches with prodigious slaughter. Victorinus, captain of the guards, was slain in this engagement, with a great number of his best troops; but the two emperors, notwithstanding, eagerly pursued their advantage, and pressed so forcibly upon the enemy, that at last they broke through their army. This induced the greatest part of the allies to draw off their armies and to desire a truce, after having slain the authors of the revolt.

THE emperors still continued to pursue the enemy; and, after overcoming them in several contests, entirely defeated them, when they returned into Italy without any very considerable loss. They had determined, indeed, to winter in Aquileia with some of their forces, in order to proceed against other nations of revolters; but the plague obliged them to remove from thence, and Verus, after being almost nine years joint emperor, was seized with an apoplexy, of which he soon after died, in the 38th year of his age. His death was generally attributed to poison, with which his wife Lucilla was charged, from revenge for his irregular passion for others.

ANTONINUS, whose peculiar goodness, as well as his zeal for Paganism, were on all occasions manifest, together with a natural respect for his own family, caused him to be deified after his death; which his infamous life did not much warrant, nor were the senate and people much satisfied with it.

THE emperor thought advisable again to marry his daughter Lucilla to Pompeianus; after which, being left to reign alone, the burden of his government being in this respect lightened, that he had no longer to govern an emperor as well as an empire, he departed from Rome to finish the war  
against



against the revoltors. The Marcomanni had now united, not only with the Quadi, but the Sarmatians, Vandals, and other barbarous nations, and were become more formidable than ever; and to add to his comfortless situation and prospect, his army was wasted by pestilence and the losses of former encounters, his treasury exhausted by vast expences, and he was surrounded by difficulties which he had never before known. To recruit his army, he enlisted the gladiators, the banditti of Dalmatia and Dardania, and even the slaves, which had never been practised but in the second Punic war; and he raised supplies by selling the moveables which belonged to the empire, after the example of Nerva and Trajan. In his first engagement he was routed with the loss of 20,000 men, and pursued to the very walls of Aquileia, after hearkening superstitiously to the prophecy of an impostor, who had assured him of success on certain conditions; which gross affront so roused the Roman courage and fury, that they speedily repulsed these formidable invaders, and, having driven them into Pannonia, so harassed them by continual skirmishes, that they were compelled to accept such terms of peace as the emperor thought fit to impose upon them.

AFTER the emperor had celebrated his Decennalia in the following year, and continued for two or three years more to regulate the affairs of the empire, in devising the means of moderating public expences, and restraining various kinds of luxury, and in various respects endeavouring to reform the morals of the people, the Marcomanni again took up arms with greater fury than before. Their only design had been to lay asleep the jealousy of the emperor by submission; and, having now gained to their cause the alliance of the nations from Illyricum to the farthest part of Gaul, their appearance was formidable. The usual preparations of Pagan sacrifices being first attended to, as a necessary preliminary to success, he marched to Carnutum, where he passed the river Danube by a bridge of boats, and soon gained considerable advantages over the enemy in several encounters; which induced several of the principal allies, from astonishment at his rapid victories, to submit themselves to his mercy. But his most considerable engagement was amongst the Pannonian mountains; and this must have proved fatal to the Roman empire, if some miraculous interpositions of providence had not been manifested to deliver the army from the greatest peril. The battle began by the enemy's slingers across the river Granus, by which Antoninus was in personal danger; and the affront so roused the Romans, that they furiously pas-



fed the river, and, falling upon the enemy, made a terrible slaughter.

POLICY directing the enemy to retire, they rightly judged that they should be pursued, and therefore left several companies of archers, supported by some horse, to skirmish with the Romans, as if they designed or wished to interrupt their progress; which induced the Romans briskly to advance to attack these archers, who fled immediately according to orders, and being pursued by the Romans with more bravery than conduct, a thing not unusual after success, the whole army was cunningly drawn forward among scorched and barren mountains, and suddenly surrounded on all sides. In this situation, though so extremely disadvantageous, they continued fighting, depending upon their invincible courage; so that their loss greatly exceeded that of the enemy, who acted merely upon the defensive, and had determined not to risque any hazard in effecting instantly what delay must soon accomplish for them.

ASTONISHED as were the Romans by this change of conduct in their enemies, they soon found the effects of the excessive heat between the mountains, which produced great weariness with extreme thirst; these evils, together with their wounds, quite disheartened and confounded them. Perceiving, too late, that they could neither fight nor retreat, and that they must either suffer themselves to be cut in pieces, or become a prey to their barbarous enemies, rage and despair took possession of their minds. Antoninus himself, concerned for the miseries of his soldiers, ran through all the ranks, and exerted his utmost eloquence to raise their hopes, but in vain, by profusions of sacrifices, in which they no longer confided. There was now nothing to be heard but groans and lamentations throughout the army; nothing to be seen but the most distressing marks of the most awful desolation. The enemy, moreover, were now preparing to attack them, when the heat of the sun, reflected from the sides of the towering mountains, had exhausted their strength; and all expectation failed them, having no farther resources in their courage, or fortune, or the gods.

AT this instant, when the enemy was advancing, an extraordinary supply of rain from heaven refreshed their drooping spirits; even their parching mouths were raised to receive the comforting cordial, besides what they could collect in their helmets and bucklers. In this situation the barbarians attacked them, and caused them to drink their own blood mingled with their water; but the same clouds which supplied the Romans with such a seasonable relief, and dissipated their thirst,



thirst, discharged a terrible storm of hail upon their enemies, accompanied with extreme lightning and thunder. These tremendous flames from heaven particularly affected them, so as to scorch their bodies exceedingly, which was productive of the utmost confusion; for they could neither be extinguished by their water, nor their own designed wounds. Many of them now surrendered themselves to the Roman arms, with their wives and children, unable to bear the effects of these terrible visitations; and hastened to receive and partake of the signal benefit which was now conferred upon the Romans. All such persons were accepted by the emperor with great clemency; but the soldiers, who were more enraged at the affront they had received, than affected with the danger they had just escaped, destroyed all who continued their resistance, dispersed the rest, and took great numbers of prisoners.

SCARCELY had this wonderful victory been obtained, and an entire submission of these barbarous people effected, than the news arrived that Cassius, who passed for a descendant of the ancient Cassius, and probably one of the lieutenants of Verrus in his Eastern expeditions, had caused himself to be proclaimed emperor in Syria. He was a hardy general, and at first was very successful; but he soon came into disrepute with his own soldiers, and was slain at the end of three months and six days after his revolt, when his head was sent to the emperor, which, instead of treating with ignominy, he caused to be honourably interred. But the emperor continued his designed journey into the East, to settle the armies and people in their duty; first going to Antioch, then into Egypt, and from thence to Pelusium, and, returning by Smyrna, where he made some stay, he afterwards returned to Athens. Here he was initiated in the grand mysteries of the Pagan religion; and, after conferring many honours on the inhabitants, and establishing professors of all sciences with magnificent pensions, he returned to Rome, where he held a triumph for his victories in Pannonia. In this he joined his son Commodus, now about 15 years of age, and declared him Augustus, by which he invested him with all the honours of a compleat partnership.

ONCE more did the northern barbarians disturb the peace of the empire by taking up arms during this reign. Antoninus had now been about two years at Rome since his return from the East; and he prepared to march against them in person, but first went to the senate and requested money from the public treasury for the purpose, though in his own power, a proceeding till then unknown in the history of any emperor. He also married his son Commodus to Crispina, the daughter of Valens, a man of consular dignity; he went likewise to the



temple of Bellona, and performed the ancient ceremony of the Javelin. At the request of the people, he also spent three days in explaining difficulties in morality, and giving them short maxims and rules of conduct; after which he marched his army towards the enemy, with his son Commodus, in which war he gained as great advantages as he had before done, though attended with as many difficulties. Many bloody battles were fought, in which the victories were always the effect of his management, frequently and boldly exposing his person to encourage his soldiers; he also built many strong forts, and performed such other things as were adapted to keep the country in subjection.

THE calamities of the Christians during this reign, it has been already intimated, were great. Tertullian and Lactantius speak favourably of the emperor in this respect, as having issued no laws against them; but his extreme indulgence to the Pagan philosophers, who were their declared opposers, his superstitious zeal for Paganism, and his considering the sufferings of the Christians as meer obstinacy, lead us naturally to conclude that he superseded the restraints of his predecessor, and encouraged the execution of the ancient laws against them which prohibited all religions not approved by the senate.

THOUGH we meet with but few martyrdoms in the beginning, the storm became heavy in the fifth year, when Justin Martyr made a vigorous effort in favour of the Christians, in opposition to an ill-natured Cynic philosopher, called Crescens, a notorious slave to all vice and wickedness. His disciple Tatian also gave this philosopher many harsh epithets. About this time several persons perished by martyrdom at Smyrna, but the heroic conduct of the famous Polycarp is proverbial, over whose body the flames had no power, resembling in this respect his master St. John, who escaped unhurt from a caldron of oil; and when the executioner was commanded to terminate his life with the sword, so great was the quantity of blood which issued from his body as to put out the fire, which had been prepared to burn him alive.

MANY persons perished at Rome on the same account; which excited Justin to prepare an apology in their favour, who was soon after, with six others, called to suffer martyrdom, after a respectful, but undaunted testimony to the truth of his religion. The Christians at this time had several distinguished writers, among whom Dionysius and Tatian, who succeeded his master in his school for Christians, are particularly to be noted. About the 12th year of this emperor, the renowned Pausanias pursued his History of Greece.



It has generally been supposed, that the deplorable disasters of the Roman empire, which accompanied the persecution in the beginning of this reign, were so many instances of the displeasure of heaven at their infidelity; and, what may seem extraordinary, it is asserted, on still stronger authority, that the prayers of the Christians, though at that time so heavily persecuted, effectually prevailed to save the whole Roman army by a miracle, as we have related, among the Pannonian mountains. It is added, that from this time the persecution abated, in consequence of the emperor's letter to Rome in their favour.

AFTER two or three years, the governors of provinces took occasion, from the emperor's known zeal for Paganism, to revive the persecution, with great fury, in various parts. Many apologies were written in behalf of the Christians, and particularly by Athenagoras, a famous philosopher of Athens; notwithstanding which, it raged dreadfully at Lyons in Gaul, where many renowned persons were martyred. About the latter part of this emperor's reign, many other eminent martyrs are mentioned in various other places also; and though he is said to have relieved the Christians soon after, yet he presently fell sick at Vienna, when upon a third expedition against the northern nations, which speedily occasioned his death. It has been said, that the physicians, to ingratiate themselves with his son, who could not bear restraint, as soon as he began to be indisposed, gave him poison; for he lost his voice almost immediately, and his life on the following day, which was on the 17th of March, in the 59th year of his age; after a reign of 19 years and 10 days.

WHETHER the emperor was induced to relax the laws against the Christians, on account of the conduct of Lucius, king of Britain, is not material. It is certain, however, that this king sent to the head of the Christian church at Rome, to desire the assistance of some of the Christians, to instruct him and his people in that religion by whose means, having received two eminent men, it shortly spread over all his dominions. What is no less certain is, that the emperor soon after gave some ease to this oppressed people; many of whose champions had grievously suffered during his reign.

As an Heathen prince, he was a man of profound wisdom and understanding; nor were his virtues of a less splendid nature, though tinged with some vices. For he has not only been accused of too much affectation and reservedness, which might result from his profession of the Stoical philosophy, but of arrogance and dissimulation; he is also blamed for incontinency,



nency, and a most unreasonable partiality to his own family and relations. His wisdom and understanding were also allayed with such an excess of Paganish superstition, as was productive of innumerable hardships and oppressions to many of his subjects; those more especially who in any respect favoured the doctrines of Christianity, which far exceeded the most sublime philosophy. His excellent meditations, which he left behind him, may be considered as most noble patterns of morality, from which Christians need not be ashamed to copy.

ONE of the greatest misfortunes of this partiality was, his giving the title of Augustus to his son Commodus, when he was only 15 years of age; by which injudicious act he raised him above the controul of his father, and afforded himself sufficient cause to dread the consequence. Though he had endeavoured to improve the mind of his son with the most useful instructions, and the aid of the best masters, his growing vices, which he seemed to inherit from his mother, were daily more conspicuous. When Antoninus fell sick, he had the distracting reflections, which were but ill suited to the temper of a Stoic philosopher, to know that his conquests were unsettled, and that his enemies had their swords in their hands; that the people also were inclined to revolt, and that the irregularities of his son and successor, scarce 19 years of age, were such as presented him a very gloomy and melancholy prospect. He recommended him to the care of his principal friends and officers, with many strong expressions of the consequences which he seemed to forebode; and particularly cautioned him against the pernicious effects of flattery.

THE death of Antoninus was universally regretted, as if the whole glory and prosperity of the Roman empire had departed with him. The senate and people did not wait, as was usual, to deify him after his funeral, but determined on that honour immediately; and, not content with the usual mode of doing this, in the erection of a golden statue, and a public decree, they declared all those persons to be sacrilegious, who had not in their houses some picture or statue of this emperor.

THE name of Lucian, the Roman philologist, occurs in the writings during this emperor's reign; to which we may add that of Athenagoras, philosopher of Athens, the date of whose works is fixed by chronologists in the same æra.



## C H A P XL.

*From the DEATH of the ANTONINES to the DEATH of  
SEVERUS.*

[ANN. ROM. 932. A. D. 180.]

HAVING now completed the reigns of the “five good emperors,” scenes of a very different nature speedily succeeded. Commodus, however, was acknowledged as emperor without opposition by the army and senate, and speedily after by the provinces. He was, at this time, with the army; and, in order to engage their favourable opinion, he made great promises of a just and regular government, and continued for some time to submit to the directions of his father’s friends. Flattery he had ever been disposed to encourage; and some designing persons, taking advantage of his youth, induced him to leave the wars, and return to the pleasures of Rome, contrary to the sentiments of those counsellors, who advised him unanimously to see an end of this war himself. But he made a very hasty peace with the enemy, which his father had almost reduced to an entire obedience; and then advised the senate of his approach to Rome, where he arrived in a little more than six months from the death of his father.

As he passed through the various cities in his way, he was received with incredible joy and solemnity; to whom the memory of his father was dear, and from the hopes they conceived of his happy reign. His entrance into Rome was peculiarly flattering; every demonstration of joy being manifested, from the favourable hopes they entertained that the son and grandson of the two great Antonines must conduct the government of affairs worthily. For about two years he behaved with great decency and moderation, so long as he hearkened to his father’s friends; but when, through simplicity and timidity, he suffered himself to be the slave of his attendants, who gradually corrupted his mind, that cruelty which at first was dictated by others degenerated into habit, and became a ruling principle. The honour of his family, and the dignity  
of



of his office, were equally disregarded; and his lewdness and incontinence were notorious and disgraceful.

His unworthy behaviour, together with his cruelties and oppressions, occasioned a dangerous conspiracy; which was the more dangerous, from its formation within the walls of the palace. Lucilla, the emperor's sister, who had been the empress of Lucius Verus, could not patiently view Crispina in a superior condition to herself; she, therefore, engaged one of her lovers, though married a second time to Pompeianus, a senator of distinguished merit and unshaken loyalty, (exactly pursuing the conduct of the empress Faustina) to act the part of an assassin. It was determined that he should deal the first blow, and that the conspirators should be ready at hand to support it. By an haughty menace, which preceded the stroke, the effect was in a great measure prevented, which by a silent proceeding he might have secured; and he was thereupon instantly seized by the guards, when he discovered at once the authors of the conspiracy, who were speedily executed, with many innocent persons also who shared the same fate. The empress Crispina, too, was accused of adultery, for which she suffered, with Faustina, his father's cousin german, and great numbers of the most illustrious of the Roman nobility.

In these executions many innocent persons suffered, instead of others who were guilty; he permitted criminals and offenders to escape for money, and for a certain sum granted privilege to many, to inflict death, or other punishments on their enemies. His enormities, indeed, were so bold, and his tyranny so daring, that scarce any thing could equal his furious resentment of the most trifling opposition. Yet to his favourite Perennis, a captain of his guards, was much of this odious and detestable conduct attributed; under whose influence the emperor's avarice and cruelty were not less notorious than his valour and hardness. Under the same influence, too, were many governments and places sold, many unjust confiscations and seizures made, and the most dreadful barbarities committed.

We should not omit, in this place, those two innocent victims of tyranny, Maximus and Condianus, two brothers of the Quintilian family, whom Commodus caused to perish together; whose disposition was so exactly the same in every thing, that they appeared to possess but one soul. They had been raised to the consulship under the Antonines in the same year; and the latter of these emperors had conferred upon them jointly the administration of government in Greece, with  
a great



a great military command, when they obtained a signal victory over the Germans.

AFTER the senate had condemned the senator Apollonius, who was eminent for his philosophy and learning, for supporting and maintaining the Christian religion, they were themselves severely punished, by the unjust death of many of their members; partly through the cruelties of the emperor, but more, perhaps, by the wicked designs of Perennis. Having accumulated an immense treasure, by acts of extortion and the forfeited estates of the nobles who had been sacrificed to his avarice, with the Prætorian guards entirely at his command, he began to think of obtaining the empire; but the licentious monarch was roused from his lethargy by a multitude of accusations, and particularly by a deputation of 1500 select Britons, whose determined and resolute behaviour obtained the minister's death as the redress of their grievances.

THIS danger occasioned a momentary change; when he undertook to repeal many obnoxious acts. But he soon returned to his usual pleasures; and, under the management of Cleander, another favourite, who for cruelties, rapines, and bribes, even exceeded the former, the people of Rome were so dreadfully oppressed that they marched in a body, with arms in their hands, and insisted that Commodus should deliver up his minister and his two sons to their just demands. He now suspected every one; and the most malicious informers were most welcome to him, by which means many innocent persons perished. The revolt of Maternus, too, had soured his temper still more; whose stratagems would have succeeded, if he had not been deceived by his own party, from a hope of advantage.

WALLOWING in all kinds of gross impieties and senseless fooleries, Commodus now fell into the most unheard-of extravagances; commanding that he would be called Hercules, the son of Jupiter, appearing with a lion's skin round his body, and a great club in his hand, which, in addition to his executions, gave him more the appearance of a monster than a man.

THE misfortune of having such a governor, was increased by the calamities which overtook the empire. About two years before he had arrived to so dreadful a pitch of profligacy, the capitol, with the adjacent buildings, and particularly the famous libraries, which the ancients had so very carefully collected, were burnt down by lightning. Another fire at this time broke out, which consumed the famous temple of peace, in which Vespasian had deposited the  
rich



rich spoils of Jerusalem; with that of Vesta, by which the ancient image of Pallas was publicly exposed. It raged for several days before it could be stopped. What added to this calamity was, that many rich men had lodged their riches there, as a place of security, which involved many persons, besides those whose houses were consumed, in the greatest distress.

INFAMOUS as the conduct of this emperor was, it was productive of much comfort to the Christians, who lived peaceably during this reign; to which, as we are told, the emperor's favourite concubine Marcia, who succeeded the empress Crispina in every thing but the title, much contributed from her extraordinary influence over him. We read only of the senator already mentioned, who suffered death, on the accusation of his own servant; and his punishment, by the authority of an edict of Marcus Antoninus, preceded that of his master, which was sufficient to deter others from a similar conduct. About four or five years after Pantæus, the governor of the catechetical school at Alexandria, was selected to accompany some Indian emissaries to preach Christianity in those countries; in which journey he met with several Indians who retained the faith, though very imperfectly, that had been declared to them by the apostle St. Bartholomew.

We now come to the period when the despicable and odious conduct of the emperor became insupportable to all. His propensity for the exercise of gladiators had long been known; but he now resolved, on the night before the feast of Janus, to lodge in a fencing school, from whence he determined to issue forth the next day, as a common gladiator, to fence naked before the people. From this design, the persuasions of his beloved Marcia, his general Lætus, and his chamberlain Electus in vain were urged to dissuade him; he was, on the contrary, so provoked as to command their departure, and, on retiring into his chamber to repose himself, after his usual custom, he wrote in a book the names of those three persons, with a great number of senators and wealthy persons, whom he determined that night to destroy. Marcia accidentally came into possession of this account; and consulted the means of safety by resolving to prevent the tyrant's designs. Poison was presented to him in a glass of wine; and, throwing him into a slumber, he was afterwards strangled by one of the destined victims of his resentment, when nature was struggling to throw off the oppression. This happened on the 30th day of December, in the 31st year of his age, after a mischievous and shameful reign of 12 years, 9 months, and 14 days.



HIS body was now, without delay, conveyed secretly out of the palace, before the citizens, or even the courtiers, had the smallest suspicion of the emperor's death. It passed through the guards, most of whom, according to custom, were drunk or asleep, packed up as a bale of useless furniture. The measures of the conspirators had also been taken beforehand, in providing for a successor.

IN a reign of such dissoluteness and corruption, it would be strange if the sciences of letters and philosophy were countenanced and encouraged; however we find the names of Laertius, who flourished in the beginning of it, and Andronicus, who was living towards the end of it, besides some Christian writers of note and eminence, especially the noted Clemens Alexandrinus.

IT was necessary to fill the vacant throne without delay. Accordingly they repaired, by night, at a late hour, to the house of Helvius Pertinax, the præfect of the city, and an ancient senator of consular dignity; who had successively governed most of the provinces of the empire, and distinguished himself by a firm and prudent conduct, as well as integrity. Instead of death, which he at first expected, as the consequence of this visit, he is prevailed on to accept the government; and he is led to the camp of the Prætorian cohorts, who readily consent to his being emperor, after being imposed on with respect to their patron's death. He was then conducted into the city, to be confirmed by the senate; which being done, the senate vented the utmost maledictions against the memory of Commodus.

THE birth of Pertinax was obscure; but he had broke through it, and had been particularly noticed by the second Antoninus. He was now about 68 years of age. His government commenced with restraining the licentious conduct of the Prætorian soldiers, and curbing their accustomed insolence to the people. His honourable and courteous demeanour secured to him the confidence and esteem of all good men; and the prospect of their happiness filled their hearts with universal joy.

BUT the Prætorian soldiers, far from relishing these reformatations, which threatened them with a revival of the ancient discipline, resolved to counteract him, by raising up some powerful opponent. They strongly suspected, to say the least, that Commodus, for whom they had a profound veneration, had been murdered; and they now determined, after many unsuccessful attempts to accomplish this business, to attack him openly in his palace. Two or three hundred of the most desperate soldiers marched at noon-day, with their drawn  
swords,



swords, and with the countenance of furies, to effect this dreadful scene; and as they had engaged the guards in the conspiracy, the gates were instantly thrown open, and they entered the palace without opposition. The boldness of the emperor deserved a better fate. He firmly advanced to meet them, and recalled to their minds his own innocence, and the obligation of their recent oath of fidelity; at which, as if ashamed of their horrible design, and staggered by the majestic firmness of the emperor, they were instantly confounded. But despair of pardon for such heinous attempt rekindled the flame of their fury; and he was speedily dispatched with a multitude of wounds, after a short reign of 12 weeks and three days, universally lamented by the people. The manner and occasion of his death gave the utmost cause of apprehension of approaching misfortunes to the empire.

WHEN the Prætorian soldiers had thus violated the sanctity of the throne, by the daring and impious murder of Pertinax, no wonder that they should proceed, by their subsequent conduct, to dishonour its majesty. It is scarce credible, what was nevertheless true, that Sulpicianus, who was governor of the city and father-in-law to the emperor, should actually be treating for the empire, by the offer of a large sum of money to the soldiers, when the head of Pertinax was borne triumphantly on a lance to the camp. Flushed with their success, some of them had the daringness, heretofore unheard of, to run out upon the ramparts, and there publicly to proclaim that the empire was to be disposed of to the highest bidder; which created an universal grief and shame throughout the city.

THOUGH Sulpicianus had offered a donative of 5000 drachms (above 160 pounds sterling) to every soldier, no sooner did the news reach the ears of Julianus, a wealthy senator, than he immediately struck the bargain at 6250 drachms (upwards of 200 pounds sterling); on which the city gates were instantly thrown open to the purchaser, and he was declared emperor, contrary to the wish both of the senate and people. But since they could not resist the tumult, they were constrained to submit to the innovation.

JULIANUS was grandson to the famous lawyer, who composed the perpetual edict in the reign of Adrian, and about 57 years of age. In vain did he struggle to render himself popular; for his scandalous election he was detested by the senate and people, and for his parsimony and avarice the soldiers, who had thus corruptly raised him, were not less dissatisfied. The commanders of the armies abroad were hereupon induced to aspire to the same dignity; of these were  
Pescenius



Pelcenius Niger in the East, and Clodius Albinus in Britain. But Septimus Severus, who was nearest to Italy, from Niger's delay at Antioch, first arrived there, to revenge, as he pretended, the death of Pertinax; and in vain did Julianus attempt to oppose him, having neither courage or knowledge for the business. The senate, immediately on the near approach of Severus to the city, declared Julianus a public enemy, and ordered him to be slain; having only reigned 9 weeks and two days.

No sooner had the senate and people acknowledged Severus for their emperor, than he set himself to revenge the murder of Pertinax, and to do honour to his memory. He had given orders to the Prætorian soldiers to receive him unarmed; and they consented readily, as a token of submission, advancing towards him with laurel branches. A select part of the army of Illyricum now surrounded them; and Severus, reproaching them for their barbarity and infamy, stripped them of all their military ornaments, and banished them to the distance of 100 miles from Rome.

HAVING paid the respect to the memory of Pertinax, which was so pleasing to the senate and people, and regulated some abuses which he found in the empire, he marched against Niger, whose reputation and power were most to be dreaded; to which preference, probably, he was more excited, as being more desired at Rome than himself, but pretending only by this march to regulate the eastern provinces. In two engagements near the Hellespont, and in the narrow defiles of Cilicia, the fate of Niger and his sons, which were then at Rome, and had fallen into his hands among the children of the provincial governors, was decided; for they were soon involved in the ruin of their father, being first banished, and afterwards put to death.

THE city of Antioch, to which Niger had fled, was demolished; and great severities were exercised against those who had taken part with him. Byzantium still held out, even after his death, but was at length reduced.

His object now was against Albinus. Though he had not assumed the imperial title, he accepted that of Cæsar, which was offered him by Severus; who continued his artful and concealed animosity till he had effected the ruin of Niger, of which event he sends messengers with a letter to inform him, full of pretended affection and esteem, but with instructions to obtain a private audience and to plunge their daggers in his heart.

ALBINUS, roused with this treatment, passed over to Gaul, and prepared to revenge this treacherous conduct; but  
unable



unable to withstand a veteran and victorious army, after displaying much valour and intrepid courage, his fate also was decided. We learn that 150,000 Romans were engaged in this battle; and that, for a short time, so doubtful was the issue of this contest, both the name and person of Severus appeared to be lost irrecoverably. Had he seconded the wishes of the senate and people of Rome, during the contest with Niger, he must have succeeded to the empire; but he fell a martyr to his unsuspecting temper and goodness.

When Severus returned to Rome, he upbraided the senate with their affection for Albinus, and ingratitude to himself; many of whom, and of the nobility, he condemned to death for being friends to him, as he did also those of Niger's party. Where proofs were not full enough for his purpose, he is supposed to have forged many letters, which he produced against them. Avarice, as well as revenge, had also a considerable share in these condemnations; and therefore many ladies suffered, because they were opulent. The wives and children and even the clients of the senators attended them in death and the same ruin extended to the noblest provincials both of Spain and Gaul. He now resolved to revive the memory of Commodus, and, in defiance of the senate, caused him to be canonized and adored as a god.

CARACALLA, his son, had been declared Cæsar, after his return from the East; whither, after he had revenged himself on the adherents of both parties, he soon repeated his visit, to punish some kings who had favoured Niger. Peace was purchased in Armenia by presents and hostages; and, after visiting Arabia Felix, where he plundered several cities, then sailed along the Euphrates to Parthia and Persia, whose princes had invaded the empire, where he took and plundered all before him. Caracalla had now the title of Augustus given him, and his younger son Geta, that of Cæsar; and the former was now admitted a partner in the empire.

SEVERUS, being returned to Rome, triumphed with great magnificence over the nations he had so lately subdued. He also celebrated his Decennalia; his son Caracalla also about this time married the daughter of his favourite Plautianus, who not long after received the just reward of all his wickedness. The emperor bestowed on the soldiers a donative of a million and a half of our money; and two years after he also celebrated the grand secular games, which was 57 years after the last under Antoninus Pius, and just 100 after those under Claudius. The following year the Africans had no corn, as a punishment of their crime, for desiring their governor to prohibit



prohibit to the Christians the use of threshing-floors and burying places.

ALL writers agree that the emperor Severus applied himself diligently to public affairs; and vigorously distributed justice with an impartial hand. He diligently attended to the wants of his empire, for which he made suitable provision; improved the public resources, increased the public granaries, and filled the treasury. But his indulgence to the legions, whilst it secured obedience to himself, sapped the very vitals of subordination; and occasioned the most grievous calamities in the empire for near eighty years after. He also renewed, though not exactly in the same manner, a body of guards, in the room of the Prætorian cohorts whom he had banished.

HE now gave to Geta the title of Augustus, with the same power as Caracalla, and declared them joint successors to the empire; but was much dissatisfied with the conduct of the latter. Soon afterwards advice arrived that the northern inhabitants of Britain were in arms, in such force as to endanger the stationed legions there; and though old and infirm, he resolved to go against them personally, taking his sons with him to restrain their irregularities. Peace was offered on the news of his approach; but he refused it, from the ambition of adding another title to his honours, and, after encountering numerous difficulties and miseries with becoming fortitude, he compelled his enemies to deliver up a considerable part of their country, with all their arms.

AFTER this victory, Severus caused the famous wall of Adrian to be rebuilt, whence he retired to York; where, through age and travel, augmented by his grief for the distressing conduct of his son Caracalla, he fell into a disorder, of which he lingered for some time, but at last expired after a reign of 17 years, 8 months, and three days, from the time of his being declared emperor by the senate, at the age of 65 years.

UNIVERSALLY commended for his wit and learning, his prudence and policy, we have noticed his cruelty and dissimulation; and his temper was fitted for performing the noblest acts and the bloodiest severities. In his reign, the Christians were subject to a heavy persecution, through the fury of the people, by the standing laws of the empire; but this was neither by the order nor encouragement of Severus, though many of them suffered, particularly upon all public misfortunes, as all calamities were attributed to them. In this persecution many persons suffered in Africa, Egypt, and Lyons; particularly the famous Irenæus, and many others. The emperor's edict, which forbade all persons, under the severest penalties,



penalties, to turn either Jews or Christians, had the effect of reviving and increasing it; and the father of the renowned Origen was a martyr therein, and his estate confiscated, leaving a wife and children totally without support, which Origen, after being an object of compassion to a rich lady of the city, soon obviated by opening a school for the profession of the liberal arts. Some time after, on the retreat of St. Clement from the persecution, he was called to the chair of the great school of Alexandria, though only 18 years of age; a charge which he successfully executed with infinite diligence, and with a behaviour which produced great numbers of disciples. Though Tertullian, about this time, began to waver in his opinions, he still defended the Christians, as he had done formerly in his famous apology to the magistrates and governors of the Roman empire, and many other works.

THE accusations against Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, whose piety and miracles rendered him an eminent example to the Christians, were punished in a very singular manner. Though they induced him to retire into obscurity, the imprecations of his accusers upon themselves, in calling for fire, leprosy, and blindness, were fully manifested; the first being burnt in his house, with the whole family, the second was entirely covered with the disease he had invoked, and the third was so terrified at the judgment of these, that he publicly confessed their base conduct, and fearing the just punishment of Heaven, lamented and wept till he lost his eye-sight.

NOT long before the death of this emperor, it is generally supposed that Philostratus, the Athenian orator, wrote the famous legend of Apollonius Tyanæus, who died in the first year of the reign of Nerva, about 113 years before. Albinus, the noted anatomist, died in the time of this emperor; as did the famous Galen, at the age of 70, the most eminent physician which had appeared, if we except Paracelsus, among the ancients. Clemens Alexandrinus wrote also in this reign as well as that of Commodus.



## C H A P. XLI.

*From the DEATH of SEVERUS to the DIOCLESIAN ÆRA.*

[ANN. ROM. 964. A. D. 211.]

THE two sons of Severus, who had accompanied him into Britain, speedily determined to return to Rome with the ashes of their father; where they deified him according to the ancient custom, being acknowledged emperors without opposition. Caracalla was now about 23 years of age; had formerly been of a very compassionate and tender disposition, but was much altered for the worse. His brother, Publius Septimus Geta, was naturally of a milder turn, and a favourite with the people; so that the other endeavoured to destroy him by poison, and corrupted the Prætorian soldiers by presents to favour his proceedings.

Two such opposite tempers, possessing equal powers, and thwarting each other in all matters of public administration, were productive of numerous disorders and factions. It was productive, however, of one good effect, and procured a respite from the persecution of the Christians, after it had continued for 14 years; but the attention of Caracalla was only diverted to other cruelties. After a short reign of one year and 23 days, Caracalla, unable to bear a rival, which was a living and perpetual reproach upon his conduct, murdered his own brother, even in the arms of his mother, to whom he had fled for shelter; and, not content with this, he rushed immediately out of the palace, hastened to the camp, and repaired to the images of their gods, before which he prostrated himself to thank them for his deliverance.

STAGGERED as were the soldiers at this extraordinary conduct, at last, as if recovering from the most dreadful panic, he discovered the cause of his perturbation; on which he declared that he would live and die with them, and instantly assured them, that they should have the whole of that incredible mass of money, which Severus had collected during his reign. Hereupon they engaged to force the senate to justify the murder of Geta, as a necessary act of policy; which being effected, he exercised some acts of mercy and also deified his



brother, as if to quiet his manes, and to hush the public opinion.

His appearance of remorse, and a desire of doing honour to his brother's memory, was of short duration. The friends of Geta, with all his servants and guards, their wives and children, were soon put to death without mercy, amounting to 20,000; so wantonly did the blood of her best citizens overflow the streets, by order of one of the greatest monsters in the universe.

PROPOSING to visit the empire, he first goes to Gallia Narbonensis, where the greatest cruelties were committed, and then returned to Rome; but he soon proceeded to Germany and the Danube, where he committed many cruelties, notwithstanding his conformity to the German habit and other acts of obsequiousness to gain popularity. Passing through Thrace, he came into the lesser Asia, where the consciousness of his enormous crimes began to disturb his mind, and present his imagination with the most frightful spectres. In this restless condition, he visited Troy and Alexandria, and from thence passed into Syria; where, under pretence of marrying the daughter of Artabanus, king of Parthia, he treacherously fell upon his army, with a terrible slaughter, so that the king, who was come to meet him, with a splendid concourse of nobility, with difficulty escaped.

SUCH treachery and cruelty soon met their deserved punishment; for one of his own commanders, Macrinus, contrived to procure his assassination, which was effected by the hands of Martialis, a centurion of the guards, who plunged a dagger into his back, so that he died instantly, when he was withdrawn upon a natural occasion.

TERTULLIAN had, early in this short reign of six years, two months, and four days, from the death of Severus, wrote a seasonable defence of the Christians; soon after which the persecution ceased. When the emperor was at Alexandria, the noted Origen prudently fled to Cæsarea; and before his return from thence, he had the good fortune to discover at Jericho, amongst some other Greek and Hebrew books, a new version of the Old Testament into Greek.

OPILIUS MACRINUS, on the supposition of his innocence, was chosen emperor by the army, and acknowledged by the Roman senate; being about 53 years of age, a native of Morocco, who with favour had obtained the office of Prætorian Prefect, and by treason had arrived to the empire. The king of Parthia, to revenge the injuries of Caracalla, invaded the Roman empire. It was in vain that Macrinus returned the prisoners, and charged the whole blame on his predecessor



deceffor, as the Parthians demanded a more ample reparation ; which, after feveral engagements in which the Romans were beaten, was, at laft, made by the diftribution of more than a million and a half of our money amongst the Parthians, and peace was concluded. He then gained fome fmall advantages over the Armenians, and repaired to Antioch to enjoy the pleasures of the city, without regarding the government of the empire.

By his ill-timed feverities to his foldiers, and this delay of his return to Rome, though foli-cited by letters and his own army, he loft the efteem of wife and good men. The artifices of Mœfa, who was fifter of the late empress Julia, had a fine opportunity of difplay. She caufed to be reported that her Grandfon, Heliogabalus, who was much admired by the foldiers for his fine fhape and beauty, was really the fon of Caracalla, not fcrupling to prostitute her daughter's honour, whose infamy, indeed, could fcarcely be augmented by fuch a declaration ; and by the promise of large fums of money, and producing him in the Roman camp, fhe procured his being declared emperor under the name of M. Aurelius Antoninus. Macrinus fent Julian, one of his commanders, to chaftife thefe revolters ; but his foldiers were foon corrupted, and, killing their general, joined Heliogabalus. The whole power of Macrinus was now requifite ; but he wanted courage, and his army an inclination, and he was, therefore, defeated, and purfued as far as Chalcedon, where both he and his fon were put to death, on the feventh of June, after a fhort reign of one year and two months, wanting three days.

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them insupportable. To this new image all the other gods of the Pagans were only to be considered as attendants; though some of them had the favour to be admitted as its companions.

ODIOUS and despicable as he was now to the people, his grandmother prevailed upon him to adopt his cousin German Alexander, two years younger than himself, as Cæsar and successor; which was readily confirmed by the senate, though very soon extremely displeasing to Heliogabalus, who entertained the fear of losing his own importance in the virtuous conduct of young Alexander. Attempting, on that account, by various means to destroy him, and fearing that the senate might chuse another emperor, he banished them all instantly out of the city, without allowing them time for the least preparation. After an unsuccessful endeavour to poison Alexander, he reported that he was dead, on which the soldiers immediately raised a mutiny, which was not to be appeased by presenting him personally, or by his threatening to punish the mutineers; for they soon resolved to rid the world of such a monster, and to destroy him wherever they could find him. This was effected in a sink, or drain, whither he had fled with his mother, in attempting secretly to escape; where both their heads were cut off, and their bodies treated with the utmost ignominy. His death was thus prematurely accomplished on the 11th day of March, in the 18th year of his age, after a reign of three years, nine months, and four days.

IN this reign Julius Africanus, of Palestine, obtained leave from the emperor to repair the city of Emmaus, near Jerusalem, which was afterwards called Nicopolis; when he also composed an exact chronicle of the most remarkable incidents from the beginning of the world to the third year of this emperor. We meet with the names of Minutius Felix and Hippolitus, as noted writers about this time.

ALEXANDER succeeded to the sole imperial dignity by universal consent, being now about 16 years of age. His mother, Mammæa, was a woman of admirable virtues, and had particularly requested an interview with Origen, who instructed her in the great principals of Christianity; and by her advice he selected the wisest counsellors, who, by his direction, set about a general reformation in the empire, and abolished many of the infamous customs which had been revived by his predecessor, though strictly forbidden by many of those who preceded them. In the choice of good magistrates he was peculiarly happy: the instruments of corruption were publicly branded, and the punishments of bribery and forgery were punished in a most exemplary way. In his own more  
immediate



immediate conduct he was œconomical and generous; and, after the example of the good emperors, he superintended the education of numbers of poor children.

WHEN he had reigned about ten years, he was informed of the alarming progress of Artaxerxes in the East, who had conquered Parthia and restored the Persian empire, and now was proceeding to invade the Roman provinces. The good order with which Alexander personally opposed him; gave the most favourable presages of success; as it ensured him the approbation and esteem both of his own soldiers and of the countries through which he passed. After many remarkable skirmishes, a general engagement ensued; when, by skilful management, the emperor obtained one of the completest victories which had ever been known; and it was with great difficulty that Artaxerxes escaped with life. In this battle were slain 10,000 horsemen, an amazing number of footmen, besides 200 elephants; there were taken 300 elephants, 1000 armed chariots, with an infinite number of prisoners of every rank and quality. All the countries which Artaxerxes had conquered were instantly recovered; he also took the cities of Ctesiphon and Babylon, with part of Arabia, and enlarged the bounds of the empire. Having happily established peace in the East, he had a solemn triumph on his return to Rome, where he was received with universal acclamations.

THE Germans and other nations on the North of the Danube soon after revolted. Against these also he resolved to march in person; but his regular discipline was not less intolerable to the standing legions encamped about Mentz, which had been abominably corrupted in the reign of Helio-gabalus, than their insolence and disorderly conduct were to him. His mother's penuriousness, who was with him in the camp, was ill suited to their licentious dispositions. They were also excited to opposition and mutiny by Maximinus, a noted old soldier, who resolved to accomplish his death; which was soon after effected in his tent, together with that of his mother, to the great grief of the Roman people, after a reign of 13 years and 9 days. A magnificent funeral being bestowed upon him, he was not only deified, but his birth-day ordered to be celebrated religiously, which it was for many years after.

THOUGH this emperor's religion was the national or Pagan one, yet he had a great esteem for Christianity, and revered its author as a most excellent law-giver; and it is generally believed, that Christians now first began to build churches in public in the view of the people and magistrates. History furnishes a particular account of the life of Origen



in this reign, and of his hard treatment from the pride and jealousy of Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria. After the retirement of Origen, the Jerusalem Talmud, that confused heap of extravagant notions, customs, and traditions of the Jews in those times, was composed by Rabbi Jochanan; but the modern Jews usually quote the Babylonian Talmud, of more than 300 years priority in date, unless where the Jerusalem is expressly mentioned.

THAT the soldiers, who had been excited to the murder of their emperor, should immediately declare for Maximinus, is a natural supposition; and they accordingly swore fidelity to him, who immediately joined his son Maximus with himself in equal power and authority in the empire. But the senate and people never could be persuaded to confirm the election.

MAXIMINUS was now about 62 years of age, but of low and barbarous extraction. He had attained to several military posts, on account of his monstrous stature; being eight feet and a half high, and every way sizeable in proportion. His strength and fierceness were equally extraordinary; to which his voracious and wonderful appetite were proportionate.

ONE of his first acts was to destroy the intimate friends of Alexander, and to banish all others whom he suspected of entertaining an affection for his memory. He displaced all the commanders and senators whom Alexander had appointed. All persons who knew his family, of which he was ashamed, were the victims of his fear; which occasioned a conspiracy to be formed against him, in which Magnus, a man of consular dignity, united with many of the old soldiers of Alexander. In consequence of the discovery, more than 4000 persons were destroyed, under a pretence of being concerned in it; though some think it was merely a plea to justify his cruelty. A revolt broke out soon after, with no better effect; for the soldiers withdrew from the camp and declared one Quartianus emperor, contrary to his wishes, who was afterwards butchered by the chief promoter of it, to ingratiate himself with the emperor. Much time did not elapse before he reaped the due reward of his treachery.

THE German wars soon after broke out, and prevented the progress of his cruelties at home; in which he wasted the whole country with fire and sword, and threatened to subdue all the northern nations in like manner as far as the ocean. This emperor and his son soon after exhibited some magnificent sports, with a donative to the soldiers; but the empire fell speedily into great confusion. Most of the provinces severely felt the oppression of this tyrant; but Africa was the



first which had resolution sufficient to make a grand struggle to throw off the yoke, by setting up the proconsul of the province, named Gordian, an eminent old man of near 80 years of age. The senate immediately confirmed him and his son joint emperors, and declared Maximinus and his son enemies of the State; and many of the adherents of the latter suffered grievously. Most of his governors were also removed; but in some provinces they were slain, and in others the messengers, on the contrary, had a fatal reception. But the governor of Numidia joined with Maximinus, and marching against Gordian's son, overthrew and slew him; this also was fatal to the father, and Maximinus thought of nothing but to march rapidly to Rome.

RESOLVING to be beforehand with Maximinus, from whom they could expect little favour, the senate determined to proceed solemnly to a new election; wherein Maximus and Balbinus, two worthy commanders, were named joint emperors. Hereupon new troubles arose, at the instigation of some spies from Maximinus, who raised tumults and dissensions between the Prætorian soldiers and citizens; on which many cruelties and slaughters ensued, when the city itself was set on fire by the soldiers, and a great part of it destroyed.

MAXIMINUS met with his first repulse at Aquileia, after crossing the mountainous Alps; where his cruelty, excited by his disappointments and obstacles, rendered him so odious and despicable, that his own soldiers slew both him and his son in his tent, and sent their heads to the senate at Rome, whilst they left their bodies to be devoured by dogs and birds of prey. This happened in the month of March following, after an usurpation of three years and a few days, being then about 65 years of age.

IN this restless and turbulent reign, the Christians were visited with a heavy persecution, out of a hatred partly to his predecessor who had favoured them. Many dreadful earthquakes also happened in various parts of the empire, by which whole cities and towns were swallowed up; which calamities were, as usual, attributed by the Pagans to the Christians, and served as fuel to make the fire of persecution burn more vigorously. Tertullian now published various writings relative to the conduct of Christians in such times. At this time Origen applied himself more successfully, in opposition to some rigid sentiments of Tertullian, in supporting the spirits of the Christians; but concealed himself till the violence of the storm was, in some measure, blown over, after which he resumed the charge of his school in Alexandria.



As the senate had selected Maximus and Balbus nine months before, they now continued in full power without opposition; under whom a peace was speedily established in the empire, and many good laws made, to the great satisfaction of the people. The Prætorian soldiers, who had been accustomed to make emperors, and to exact large bounties, were the only persons who disliked their election; so that their death was resolved on as a terror to all succeeding persons, not to accept the dignity without their concurrence. Unfortunately these two emperors were jealous of each other, which improved to such a pitch that each of them kept distinct guards, instead of uniting their forces against the common enemy; so that at the time of the Capitoline games, in the month of July following, the Prætorians furiously entered the palace, divested them of their robes, and haled them through the city, as criminals, to the camp. Apprehensive of a rescue, they put an end to all contest by slaying them, and leaving their bodies in the streets. This happened after the senate had declared them emperors one year and six days, but only three months and a few days from the death of Maximinus.

INDIFFERENT on whom they should bestow the empire, they met by chance the young Gordian, grandson to the old proconsul of Africa, who had been declared emperor. Him they resolve, though scarce 14 years of age, to salute with the title of Augustus and emperor, and to proclaim him their sovereign; and the senate and people, unable to withstand the choice, readily confirmed it. Yet was he generally beloved in the city, on account of the memory of his father and grandfather; and being moreover of a sweet disposition, they had reason to hope very favourably of him, especially from his steady attachment to the counsels of the wisest and most worthy persons in the empire.

AFTER he had reigned quietly about two years, Sabinianus stirred up a revolt in Africa, where he was commander, and proclaimed himself emperor; but was soon delivered up by his own men, on the news that the governor of Mauritania, by the emperor's order, was marching against him. Gordian about this time married the daughter of the præfect; whose wisdom and learning he greatly revered, and to whose good offices he was greatly indebted for his success and prosperity.

At the end of four years he understood that the Persian king had invaded the Roman provinces in the east; whither he marched personally, and, after several victories, obliged the Persians to abandon all their conquests. On this occasion he had also to stop the progress of the Goths and other barbarous



barbarous nations, who had impetuously invaded Thrace, and left them in a peaceable condition.

BUT the death of his father in law, which soon after happened, as many suppose, from the effects of poison, changed the tranquillity of this reign. His successor, as præfect of the prætorian soldiers, which was now become the first office of the empire, since their re-establishment by Severus, was a native of Arabia, who no sooner found himself in this powerful situation, than he resolved to attempt a seizure of the empire; in which, having by artifices and treachery disgraced the emperor among the soldiers, he too fully prevailed. At first he was compelled to accept Philip as his equal in the empire, and to give him the title of tutor and governor; but the latter soon acted independently, and, after a rapid series of humiliating actions, at last he caused Gordian to be slain, after a reign of five years and near nine months.

GORDIAN's inclination to learning was distinguished. His library, it is said, contained 62,000 books. About the middle of his reign was an uncommon eclipse of the sun, a matter ominous, as supposed, to the Roman government, wherein the noon-day was as dark as midnight; and in the following year was a terrible earthquake, by which many cities and towns of the empire were swallowed up and destroyed.

By the successful wickedness of Philip, he was acknowledged emperor both by the army and senate. His son, though only six or seven years of age, he chose also as his companion in the government. At this time he was about 40 years of age, and a native of Arabia, whose father was the captain of a notorious band of robbers there; but trained up in war in the Roman army. Soon after his election he made a dishonourable peace with Persia; but, after his return to Rome, he made many good laws for the reformation of vice.

IN the fourth year of his reign, which was just 1000 years from the building of the city, he caused the famous secular games to be celebrated, as if to solemnize its birth-day, with the most extraordinary splendor. Towards the latter end of his reign, the empire was visited by famine, plague, and other calamities. The Goths also had invaded the provinces, and the army which Philip sent against them had revolted, and proclaimed Marius, their general, emperor; though the same army soon after slew him. Decius was appointed to the command; and no sooner had he arrived, than, to prevent punishment for their former crime, they constrained him to accept the title of emperor. Philip was now compelled to march in person against Decius; but the soldiers, who had a greater esteem for the latter, immediately proclaimed him



emperor, and dispatched the former, after a reign of five years and a few months, being then in the 46th year of his age.

DURING his stay in the east, he is said to have conformed to the Christian worship, but this is much doubted, because it had very little effect on his conduct. Yet that religion flourished under him for some time. Tertullian died in the early part of this reign; and we meet with Origen, as still indefatigable in defending the Christians, against whom he perceived that a storm was gathering, by the completest apology, which we find among the ancients.

WHEN Decius had been acknowledged emperor, both by the senate and people, he gave the title of Cæsar to his four sons; leaving the army against the Goths to the command of Valerian, and returning to Rome. He was now in his 58th year, and of an honourable family in Pannonia. In his administration he was politic and sagacious, and active and prudent in his regulations; and so much approved that, in imitation of Trajan, the senate decreed him the title of OPTIMUS.

THE Roman empire in this reign was miserably afflicted; not only by the grievous wars and devastations of the Goths and other barbarous nations, but also by a dreadful pestilence, which raged through all the provinces, and continued from its commencement in Ethiopia, for ten years. Leaving the government of Rome in the hands of the senate, the emperor, after nominating Decius and Etruscus, two of his sons, Augusti and partners in the empire, marched against the Goths in Thrace and Mæsia, where their ravages had been most successful. Soon had the emperor a flattering prospect of destroying these free-booters, having obtained a compleat victory over them with the loss of 30,000 of their men, and had blocked them up effectually. But the treachery of his chief commander, Gallus, enabled them to attack Decius, and actually to surround him, and cut off a great part of his army; so that he rode in desperation to his fate, and was drowned in a lake.

FROM his enmity to Philip, who had been indulgent to the Christians, he commenced a most dreadful persecution against them; to which indeed they had themselves greatly contributed by the numerous vices whereinto they had fallen, and thereby provoked the divine displeasure. Contention, pride, and faction, had broke in among them; and schisms and divisions were so much persisted in, that even the fire of persecution could not restrain them. At this time great numbers were  
swept



swept away by the most cruel tortures; and though it was not equally violent in all places, it only experienced ease by the death of Decius. A great number of eminent champions are met with in this reign, many of whom were amongst the catalogue of martyrs.

EVERY disaster now befel the Roman army, from the pursuing and victorious Goths. Those who escaped fled to the legions commanded by Gallus, who, being confederate with them, was in perfect safety. By artful and popular actions, and a promise of success against the enemy, he prevailed on the soldiers to declare him emperor; at all which news the senate and people were astonished, but confirmed him in the empire. He was now about 45 years of age, and of an ancient Roman family.

His first step, after his advancement to this dignity, was to make a dishonourable peace with the Goths, by engaging to pay them an annual tribute; nor were they satisfied with this, but renewed their hostilities, with dreadful massacres, spreading desolation, not only in Thrace, Mæsia, Thessaly, and Macedonia, but in some parts of Asia. The Persians, who were never thoroughly reconciled to their subjection to the Romans, encouraged by the successful irruptions of the northern nations, entered Mesopotamia and Syria, and from thence passing into Armenia, subdued it and drove out the king of that country.

THESE troubles and calamities were scarcely regarded by Gallus, who minded nothing but the pleasures of Rome. He took his son Volusian, who was but a child, for his companion in the empire; but at last Æmilian marched against the Goths in Mæsia, where he gained a considerable victory over them, in which many thousands were slain, and a pursuit of several days succeeded. This served to exalt the character of Æmilian, and to debase that of Gallus; and the soldiers, excited by the promises and presents of Æmilian, proclaimed him emperor, which at last roused Gallus to provoke his fate, by marching against him with the utmost expedition. An engagement soon happened, whercin Gallus and his son were slain, and the whole body of soldiers thereupon joined the conqueror, in the month of May, in the year of Rome 1006. This was in the 47th year of his age, after a short reign of one year and six months; by which he received an early reward for his treachery.

AT this time the Novatian Schism divided the Christians into powerful parties; and their violence against Cyprian, whose moderation and judgment were highly laudable, was



particularly manifested. But he wrote several treatises, adapted peculiarly to the state of the times; and had the satisfaction, soon after, to perceive that the persecution declined, and soon came to a fortunate period, with the death of Gallus.

THOUGH Æmilian formed the most certain conclusion of being emperor, and wrote actually to the senate an account of his election and success, they did not attend to it. The army of the Alps also disputed his election, and chose their own commander, Valerian, who was approved by the senate; and Æmilian's soldiers slew their general, from their high opinion of Valerian, and to prevent a civil war, at the end of three months from his usurpation.

VALERIAN being now confirmed in the empire, and about 70 years of age, chose his son Gallienus, as his equal in the government. One of his first objects was to revenge the death of Gallus. The most considerable offices had been performed by him, with admirable success; and he now began his reign with many prudent regulations, and the choice of wise and able governors and experienced commanders.

FOR the first years of this emperor the Christians were patronised; but after he had been prevailed on by Macrianus, a magician of Egypt, to persecute the Christians, exercise the most abominable enchantments, and offer up the most inhuman sacrifices, the scourge of heaven speedily overtook him. The northern barbarians brought on the calamity of war in those parts; and the king of Persia overrun Syria, Cilicia, Cappadocia, and all the eastern provinces of the empire. Speedily preparing to march to Byzantium with a powerful army, he for some time, on his arrival there, resisted the Goths and Scythians; but was now obliged to turn all his attention to the king of Persia. On approaching nearer to his furious army, he became disheartened; and, offering to effect a peace by money, was deceived into the possession of that king, who treated him with every indignity, and carried him into Persia to endure a miserable servitude. In this he continued seven years, and his eyes being put out, he was head alive, and his skin suspended in one of the temples of the Persian gods, as a perpetual memorial of their victorious arms.

WHILST the emperor openly favoured the Christians, they set about the regulation of their internal disputes; during which time many councils were held, and matters determined on, respecting their doctrines; but more especially regarding their discipline. In this season died Origen, a man of the most extraordinary character and persevering industry, in favour of the Christians; though, from his great knowledge in philosophy,



lophony, not untinged with many errors. The renowned Cyprian was greatly concerned in these regulations. But in the fifth year of this emperor, the persecution broke out; and, after some continuance of it, in which many eminent persons had suffered martyrdom, Cyprian was brought before the civil tribunal, arraigned, and condemned to be beheaded, a fate which he met with the most exemplary courage and resolution.

GALLIENUS, who now remained sole emperor of Rome, paid no regard to his father's condition. He was now about 41 years of age; of considerable learning but most vicious life. His reign was confused and calamitous. The sun, for many days in the beginning, was clouded and darkened; besides which, many cities and stately edifices were overthrown by earthquakes, so that the very sea flowed through the stupendous caverns which were laid open. More than 5000 persons died also in a day of the pestilence, which then raged; and the whole empire was convulsed in every part by insurrections and revolts. The soldiers every where set up their own generals for emperors; so that this period has been generally distinguished as the age of the "thirty tyrants," each of them opposed to one another, and all of them to Gallienus. But they at least tended to secure the empire from the invasions of barbarous nations.

AGAINST Ingenuus in Pannonia, Gallienus was soon successful, whom he slew in the first place, and afterwards overthrew the Goths; but Regillianus, who succeeded him, preserved the power of empire for three years, and then was slain. Posthumus maintained his authority in Gaul for seven years; whilst the emperor attended more to his pleasures at Rome, than either to his father's or even his own concerns. But he had discernment enough to see that his father prospered, so long as he favoured the Christians; and that the tide of fortune was immediately on the ebb, when once he began to oppress them. Differing in his reasoning from all his predecessors, he allowed them a full enjoyment of their religion.

BUT these favourable edicts did not operate immediately in all places; and Macrianus, who was a great enemy to them, set up for emperor in the east, with his two sons, and possessed Egypt and many other parts. At this time Alexandria was filled with factions and seditions; a dreadful famine, and afterwards a plague succeeded to these, which overrun both the city and country, and whilst the Pagans in these terrible calamities abandoned their dying friends, the Christians every where ventured their lives to afford assistance to their infected brethren.



ABOUT this time Valens set up for emperor in Achaia, as Piso did in Thessaly; but the former soon ruined the latter, and he also perished by his own soldiers. Upon this Macrianus extended his usurpations, Odenathus of Palmyra being then engaged against the Persians; which encouraged him to march towards Rome, but was met by Aureolus, commander of the legions in Illyricum and Dalmatia, who in one battle terminated his ambitious designs by the death of himself and his son of the same name. After 30,000 of his soldiers had joined Aureolus, this accession of strength induced him to take the title of emperor; and so great was his power, that Gallienus entered into articles of peace with him.

New disturbances sprung up in the east, on the death of Macrianus, where his general, Balista, usurped sovereign authority for two or three years, as Æmilian also did in Egypt; but being afterwards closely besieged in Alexandria, in which the citizens and Christians endured many hardships, he was taken prisoner and soon after slain. Odenathus was at this time victorious against the Persians, for whom he made a solemn triumph, but never demanded from the defeated monarch a restoration of his aged father. The Goths and Scythians also made irruptions into Greece and lesser Asia; and shortly after, Saturninus, a valiant commander on the borders of Scythia, assumed the title of emperor, which he retained for three years. After Odenathus had subdued the Persians, he also defeated Balista; upon which Gallienus formally made him Augustus, and his equal in the empire.

THOUGH this was the period of the “thirty tyrants,” as they have been called; yet a modern historian, who gives us their names, says that they never exceeded nineteen.

SOME time after, the Isauri, in the lesser Asia, set up Trebellian, who was soon defeated and slain; but the country, which was inaccessible, was never wholly subdued. In Africa the tribune Celsus was proclaimed emperor, but slain at the end of seven days. The Goths also terribly ravaged the lesser Asia, Galatia, and Cappadocia, and carried away great numbers, including many Christians; these were highly instrumental in polishing and refining them, for which they were treated with so much humanity, that they declined the liberty of returning to their own countries, when it was granted them.

FOUR years after Odenathus became emperor, he was slain by Maonius, a kinsman, who caused himself to be proclaimed his successor; he soon after met the same fate. The widow of Odenathus, with her three sons, assumed the command, and ruled well; defending herself on one hand for six years  
against



against the whole Roman power, and warring on the other against the Persians. In the west, Posthumus about this time was slain in Gaul, after reigning seven years, by Lollianus; his colleague Victorinus, with his sons, and Marius, soon shared the same fate, all of them possessing the title of emperor. Tetricus afterwards proclaimed himself emperor, and supported his usurpation six years. At this time Mæsia was harassed by the Goths, and Asia and Greece by the Heruli; and in every part of the empire infinite barbarities, with murders and desolation, were committed. The vices and cruelties of Gallienus himself, which rendered him incapable of governing the empire, were the principal cause; so that the chief governors resolved upon his death, which was effected at the siege of Milan, at this time possessed by the usurper Aureolus, in the month of March, after a reign of near eight years from his father's captivity, and about fifteen from his being first declared Augustus, being now about 49 years of age.

THE Christians in the early part of this reign were much divided among themselves; and their troubles were greatly increased by the oppression of the usurper Macrianus in the east, who was a violent enemy to them. After his death, the emperor again issued edicts in their favour, though they were greatly disturbed by the usurper Æmilian in Alexandria. We have already noted that the captivity of these people by the Goths had a very agreeable effect; but their internal disputes still unhappily subsisted among them.

By general consent was Flavius Claudius brought forward to fill the vacant throne. At this time the whole country of the east was subject to Zenobia, the widow of Odenathus, Gaul and the west to Tetricus, Illyricum to Aureolus; and Thrace, with Macedonia and a part of the lesser Asia, to the Goths and Scythians. But he speedily terminated the life and usurpation of Aureolus; and, when he had reduced all his dominions, returned triumphantly to Rome.

THOUGH of an obscure birth, he shewed himself worthy of a longer reign; for he made many excellent laws, and in a short time much reformed the commonwealth. He was desirous of restoring the empire to its former glory, and feared no danger in the endeavour. It has been said, that the moderation of Augustus, the valour of Trajan, and the piety of Antoninus, were all centered and united in him. The Goths who, like an overpowering torrent, invaded the empire with above 320,000 fighting men, were repulsed with the loss of 300,000 in killed and prisoners. Many of the barbarian kings and persons of the highest rank were among the captives, and more than 2000 ships were laden with the ammunition;



tion ; so that many houses were filled with habiliments of war, and whole cities with slaves and prisoners. He afterwards recovered all their possessions in Macedonia, Thessaly, and other provinces ; and in Germany he defeated an army of 200,000 of the inhabitants of that country. But as he was marching against his remaining rivals, a pestilential fever seized him in Pannonia, which in a few days, after a short reign of about two years and one month, put an end to his great designs ; being about 56 years of age, and in the midst of conquest and glory. Statues of gold and silver were decreed to his memory by the Romans.

PORPHYRY, the Jew, afterwards a Christian, and then a Pagan philosopher, flourished in this reign.

AURELIAN was now unanimously declared emperor ; though at Rome they had an eye upon Claudius's brother, Quintillus, and had actually declared him emperor, in honour of his brother's memory. This was contrary to Claudius's last recommendation of Aurelian. But they found it in vain to maintain this choice ; and Quintillus, at the end of 17 days, opened a vein which put an end to his life, on which Aurelian quietly possessed the empire.

He was now about 57 years of age, and of approved valour ; but he was naturally very severe and cruel, especially to his soldiers. Haughtiness and pride had also some share in his disposition ; but he did many signal acts of justice, and was very assiduous in the suppression of faction.

MANY of the barbarous nations of Germany at this time ravaged Italy ; against whom Aurelian, after many superstitious rites of Paganism, marched in person, and overcame them in three battles, which put an end to the war. He now made several examples in Rome, of persons who had blamed his proceedings, when these freebooters were advancing in Italy, at which time also some conspiracies were forming.

His next expedition was against Zenobia, suppressing on his route, after some conflicts, the revolt of Bithynia. Several skirmishes ensued, and a general engagement at last took place, which was obstinately maintained on both sides ; but, though Aurelian had been several times driven to the greatest extremities, victory at last declared in his favour, after infinite pains and difficulties. She fled to Palmyra, where he did not succeed in reducing her spirit, till all succours were intercepted ; when he put the philosopher Longinus, who was her master, to death, but reserved this masculine queen to grace his triumph. He also severely chastised the inhabitants of Palmyra for their revolt. Whilst he was in the east, at the request of the prelates there, he disgraced the heretic Paul, who



who had been the occasion of much diffension, and had joined with Zenobia ; and obliged him to leave Antioch; of which he kept forcible possession, notwithstanding the decrees of the council against him.

PROCEEDING afterwards into Egypt against Firmus, another usurper, he recovered that important kingdom after much labour ; and then came to Gaul in the west, to recover that province from the usurper Tetricus. This being effected, and the empire once more in peace, he returned to Rome to triumph for his numerous victories ; in which, besides Tetricus and Zenobia, the victorious legions and an infinite number of prisoners from the various nations, were displayed.

His former cruelties, when he found himself in peace, seemed to forsake him ; for he conferred rewards even upon his enemies. Tetricus was made governor of a great part of Italy ; and on Zenobia he bestowed lands sufficient to maintain her quality, on which she lived long after, highly esteemed and applauded by all men, preserving her ancient reputation and dignity. The emperor now proceeded in many other internal regulations ; and repaired and enlarged the city of Rome.

WHILE Aurelian was perusing an edict against the Christians, which he was about to sign, a flash of lightning fell so near him that every person about him thought him to be dead. Soon after he proposed to proceed on a new expedition against the Persians ; when his principal secretary, who had doubts of his own security, after being threatened with death for some offence, since many had suffered upon slighter occasions, forged a roll of names of persons, whom, he pretended, the emperor had marked out for execution. Hence an association of common interest impelled them to prevent the design ; and he was consequently assassinated near Byzantium, with little resistance, after a reign of near five years, being 62 years of age.

IN this reign the famous Anthony of Egypt, when about 20 years old, retired to the desarts of Thebais ; the patron of solitary and recluse Christians, and the first who prescribed rules for a monastic life. The edicts which the emperor signed a short time before his death, though they did not reach the distant provinces, were productive of some martyrdoms nearer home ; but this persecution was providentially crushed in the embryo.

THERE cannot be a stronger proof of the vigour of Aurelian's government, than the difficulty and manner of deciding upon his successor. More than six months did the senate and army endeavour to compliment each other to make an appointment ; a circumstance without any precedent or parallel in  
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the whole Roman history. The administration of affairs during this period was, indeed, in the hands of the senate; who were at last prevailed on to appoint Tacitus, a consular man, about 75 years of age, which was productive of the greatest joy and satisfaction.

His first study was to reform the corruptions and abuses of the city; and he made several excellent laws, in which his moderation and goodness, as a man, were equally conspicuous with his wisdom and care as a governor. In an expedition against the Persians and Scythians, he died at Tarsus in Cilicia; some saying, that his death was natural, and others that he was killed by the soldiers, little more than a year from the decease of Aurelian.

BUT the army were more tenacious of supplying the present vacancy than the preceding one; and the several commanders, as if by consent, though unpremeditated, expatiated on the virtues necessary for an emperor, in the close of which they always mentioned probity. On this the soldiers exclaimed, "Let Probus be emperor;" who was immediately proclaimed with joyful acclamations. Florian, the brother of the late emperor, was also proclaimed by some other legions; but he soon found the powerful interest of Probus, and, after a reign of two or three months, when his soldiers were ready to forsake him, he followed the example of many distressed Pagans, and died by opening his veins.

AT this time Probus was about 44 years of age, of an ancient family in Pannonia, and habituated to arms; having signalized himself from the reign of Valerian to that of Aurelian, who had designed him for his successor; which consequently made this choice more acceptable.

IN the second year of his reign he marched with a powerful army into Gaul, to check the hasty irruptions of the Germans; where several sharp battles were fought, and one of them for two days, only with the interruption of the night. For a long time, such was their obstinacy, victory appeared to favour either side; but at last Probus, by his extraordinary skill, prevailed against and completely routed his opponent. In this and other contests, he is said to have destroyed at least 400,000 men; by which nine kings were reduced, and 66 principal cities recovered. After this he marched into Illyricum and Dalmatia to resist the progress of the Sarmatians; whom he subdued entirely by his wonderful management, encountering many difficulties, and fighting several battles, whereby the Roman provinces were secured. From thence he proceeded to Thrace and farther North to chastise the insults of the Goths; who submitted to his power on hearing of his  
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his approach, and were thereupon admitted as allies of the Roman empire.

THE peace and tranquillity of Europe being now settled, he passed over into Asia; where he subdued Isauria, which he mostly divided amongst his old soldiers, and then marched into Syria and the East to attack a people called Blemii, who had possessed themselves of part of Arabia and Palestine. The king of Persia, on his advance towards that country, though one of the most powerful monarchs in the world, submitted to restore all which had been taken from the empire, and to such other articles as Probus required; which at present terminated all cause of hostilities.

PROBUS now returned to Rome, and had a most solemn triumph; and every mouth was filled with praises of his conduct and valour. But usurpers nearer home soon disturbed the public peace; for Saturninus was raised to the dignity of emperor in Egypt, who soon lost both his empire and his life, after some difficulty experienced by Probus in this business. Bonosus and Proculus also rose in Gaul for the same purpose, whither Probus also hastened from Egypt, and quickly reduced to the greatest distress.

RETURNING again to Rome with great commendations, the soldiers and all the legions continued perfectly quiet; when he proceeded to make many new laws and regulations for the good of the empire. But being restless, he conceived the design of destroying entirely the kingdom of the Persians, and accordingly marched as far as Sirmium in Pannonia, the place of his nativity. Here he employed several thousands of his soldiers, from a regard for the city, in draining a fen, and making a large ditch or foss to receive the waters, and thereby render the lands useful to the inhabitants. He had also, whilst at Rome, and in the enjoyment of peace, employed them daily in planting vineyards, and in many public works and buildings. The fatigue of these employments, and his restraint of their licentiousness, roused them into the desperate remedy of conspiring against his life; which they very soon after effected, as he marched towards Greece, after a reign of 6 years and 3 or 4 months, being about 50 years of age.

THIS reign affords little information on the subject of the Christians, who continued in a tranquil possession of their religion; but the Manichean heretics created much disturbance amongst themselves, which was a great stigma on its professors. Anatolius, bishop of Laodicea in Syria, a man of great address and prudence, flourished at this time, and was admirable for his learning and skill in languages, and in all  
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the human arts and sciences. By his prudent counsels he preserved Alexandria from entire destruction, when it was besieged by Æmilian.

LAMENTATIONS for the premature death of Probus were general throughout the Roman empire; and every possible honour was bestowed at his funeral. The soldiers chose Carus for his successor, whom Probus had made Prætorian prefect; who had filled worthily many stations of importance, and had great experience in government. The senate very soon confirmed this election.

HIS first care was to punish the murderers of Probus, which removed all suspicion that he was accessory to his death. He appointed Carinus and Numerian, his two sons, to the rank of Cæsar; the elder of whom was wicked, insolent, and vicious, but the younger valiant, modest, and learned.

THE turbulent Sarmatians again revolted, as soon as they heard of the death of Probus; and such was the fury of their irruption into Pannonia, that they alarmed the whole empire. But Carus, after some skirmishes, brought on a battle, in which he killed 16,000 and took 20,000 prisoners. He now, in pursuit of the design of Probus, turned all his forces against the Persians; having first made his sons Augusti, and left Carinus to govern Gaul and Spain, whilst he went, with Numerian, the younger, to the East. Not only Mesopotamia, but Ctesiphon and Seleucia soon fell into his hand, and such was his pride, that he allowed himself the title of Lord and God; soon after which, as he lay sick in his tent, he was destroyed in a dreadful storm of lightning and thunder, with many others round him. This was about one year and a month, or a little more, after the death of Probus.

CARINUS, by his scandalous life, had rendered himself generally odious in Rome and the West, so that Numerian was considered as successor to his father. But such was his sorrow and grief for the loss of his father, that his tears brought on a distemper in his eyes, which rendered them so weak that he could not behold the light. Being usually carried in a close litter, his father-in-law contrived to assassinate him privately; and, to prevent suspicion, till he could secure an interest sufficient in the army to succeed him, he was carried about as before, and report was given out that he could not now endure to see the smallest light. But before Aper could effect his business, the smell of the dead body led to the discovery; on which the soldiers chose Dioclesian, one of the greatest commanders of the age, who soon caused Numerian's murderers to be brought before him, when seated on



on his imperial tribunal, and to be condemned to death, and killed Aper with his own hand. This was on the 17th day of September, in the year of Christ, by the common account, 284, and in the year of the city of Rome 1036.

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C H A P. XLII.

*From the DIOCLESIAN ÆRA to the Removal of the SEAT of  
EMPIRE to CONSTANTINOPLE.*

[ANN. ROM. 1036. A. D. 284.]

ON the death of Numerian, Dioclesian, notwithstanding that Carinus was living and possessed a large part of the empire, was considered as emperor. He was born at Dioclea in the province of Dalmatia, and was now about 40 years of age; having passed through many civil and military offices, which he discharged in general with much reputation, though he has been charged with a politic cunning, and with obstinate severity. In about two months he adopted Maximianus, a bold and intrepid commander, to whom he gave the title of Cæsar; and, after abolishing the former Æra of the battle of Actium, which had been observed 315 years, he instituted a new date, called the Dioclesian Æra, reckoning from the time of his succeeding to the empire.

CARINUS, who still continued in Gaul, though immersed in luxury and sensuality, and an utter enemy to every thing good, was a little roused by these proceedings; which induced him, being naturally bold and rash, to march against Dioclesian with a large army, in hopes of determining his fate speedily. When both armies met in Mœsia, as the new emperor expeditiously removed his forces from the East, a bloody war commenced; but Carinus was soon routed, and afterwards slain by an officer of his own army, in revenge for a private injury of a tender nature.

New troubles, however, soon broke out by an insurrection of the Gaulic peasantry, of which Maximian slew prodigious numbers, and restored tranquillity. The noted Thebæan legion, of which so many accounts have been given, may, perhaps, be assigned to this period.

CARAUSIUS,



CARAUZIUS, in Britain, soon after revolted, and maintained his usurpation for seven years; when he was slain by his companion, who held the island for three years more, who was then overthrown by the Roman army. These and some other troubles of the empire induced the emperor to give Maximian the title of Augustus, whom he appointed to preserve the western parts of the empire, whilst Dioclesian attended to the northern and eastern parts; who, by constructing extravagant fabrics, for which he oppressed many provinces, endeavoured to make Nicomedia equal to Rome.

THOUGH Maximian was addicted to vice and rapine, a most cordial friendship and similarity of disposition continued between them; and whilst Dioclesian marched against the Persian monarch, whom he compelled to accept an honourable peace, his colleague was equally successful against the Germans.

THE next year Maximian had some solemn games at Rome, and the year after Dioclesian celebrated his Quinquennalia at Nicomedia. Achilleus in Egypt now seized and held that kingdom for six years, having usurped the title of emperor; when the Persians, from these and other disturbances of the empire, again took the opportunity of invading the Roman provinces. Hereupon the two emperors met at Milan, and agreed that each should nominate a person to be Cæsar, capable of assisting them in defending the empire both from internal and external mischiefs; when Dioclesian named Galerius, a fierce and courageous soldier, but of a very churlish disposition, agreeable to his mean extraction, and Maximian chose Constantius, surnamed Chlorus, descended from the family of the emperor Claudius.

To strengthen their interest and friendship, Galerius married the daughter of Dioclesian, and Constantius, divorcing Helena, the mother of the famous Constantine, also married Theodora, the daughter-in-law of Maximian. Their departments in the empire also were apportioned; for while Dioclesian and Galerius, who possessed Illyricum, Asia, and the East, were to march, the former against Achilleus in Egypt, and the latter against the Persians and Sarmatians, Maximian, who had Italy and Africa, was to suppress the Quingentiani, consisting of the legions in the latter country united with many robbers, and were revolted. Constantius had Gaul and Britain assigned him; which he was to defend against the northern nations, and to subdue Carausius.

MAXIMIAN soon reduced the Quingentiani in Africa, and obliged them to a peace; and afterwards destroyed the robbers and usurpers in those countries, for which he assumed the

surname



urname of Herculus. But Dioclesian challenged divine honours, at the solemnizing his Decennalia. In this year it was that Carausius was slain; and in the next Maximinian solemnized his Decennalia at Rome, at which time Galerius was exercised against the Sarmatians and other nations, as barbarous as his own, with much advantage.

IN about three years more, Constantius gave a compleat overthrow to Allectus in Britain, and recovered the island after ten years revolt; as did Dioclesian that of Egypt, by the defeat of Achilleus, after six years usurpation, when he had besieged him eight months in Alexandria. Galerius, on the contrary, went into Persia with too small an army where he was routed, and lost most of his men; for which Dioclesian treated him with great contempt, but at last dismissed him to retrieve his lost honour, which he did in Armenia, where the Persians had entered, in the following spring. For having marched again with a powerful army, he was victorious; and, in pursuing his victory, entered the Persian camp, where he took the king's wives, children, and sisters, with many nobles of Persia, and great booty.

GALERIUS was so much puffed up with his victory, that his pride was intolerable; his insolence greatly excited the apprehensions of Dioclesian, and he thought himself injured that he was not saluted with the title of Augustus. Constantius, on the contrary, was mild and generous, though equally successful; for he this year conquered the Lingones, and slew 60,000 of their men. By a little anticipation, the two emperors solemnized their Quindecennalia, at Rome and Nicomedia, in consequence of these happy events.

THE young Constantine, son of Constantius, was in the war against the Sarmatians; wherein he conducted himself gallantly, and took alive the Sarmatian general a prisoner, whom he brought to Galerius. After an interval of some years, which was chiefly remarkable for the persecutions of the Christians, Dioclesian resolved to leave Nicomedia, and to celebrate his Vicennalia at Rome, and at the same time to triumph for all his victories. His colleague, Maximinian, with the two Cæsars, Constantius and Galerius, were at this time assembled; but such was the haughty spirit of Dioclesian, that he would not remain there till the beginning of the year, which was not six weeks, when he was to enter on his ninth consulship, but proceeded eastward at that unfavourable season. The winter, which was extremely cold and rainy, greatly affected his health; and a lingering sickness, which he contracted at Ravenna, and brought him into a low and uncomfortable condition



dition, detained him in Italy the ensuing summer, so that he did not arrive at Nicomedia till the latter part of that year.

IN the month of December, a lethargic disposition seized him, and many persons thought him to be dead; from which he never perfectly recovered. Early in the following year he was visited by Galerius, who first endeavoured to persuade him to resign the government, and afterwards more pointedly threatened him, as he had ineffectually done to Maximian; to which the old man was compelled to submit, when he heard that Galerius was augmenting his army. He was also forced to nominate Severus and Maximinus, two creatures of Galerius, as wicked and barbarous as himself, to be Cæsars; after which he retired to lead a private life in Dalmatia, being now about 60 years of age, and having reigned 20 years, 7 months, and 14 days. On the same day Maximinian, by consent, resigned his authority at Milan, when he had reigned with the title of Augustus near 19 years.

It was now agreed between Constantius and Galerius, that the former should enjoy the western parts of the empire, and the latter the eastern; but Constantius was of too pacific a disposition to grasp at power, and rather chose to govern well than much. He contented himself with Gaul, Spain, Britain, and his part of Germany, and gave up the provinces of Africa and Italy, which appertained to his share in the division; over which Galerius placed Severus, and bestowed the government of Egypt, Palestine, and the east to Maximin. He reserved Illyricum, Greece, and Asia minor to himself.

AT this time Constantius, the senior emperor, was about 54 years of age. He was universally beloved in Gaul; and governed with universal satisfaction, after he was emperor. By his affability and courtesy he truly reigned in the hearts of his subjects; and being determined on an expedition into Britain, though his health declined, he was anxious for the safety of his son Constantine, who had many years been kept at the court of Dioclesian, as an honourable pledge of his father's fidelity, and, since his resignation, was with Galerius in the east.

FREQUENTLY as Constantius had sent for his son, it had always been evaded; and the pressing reasons now assigned, though he was ashamed of refusing so reasonable a request, he designed by treachery and artifice to disappoint. But Constantine, having received a passport, and being apprehensive of the emperor's intriguing policy, set off as soon as Galerius had retired; and when he demanded, the next day at noon, an interview with him, he was stung with the utmost remorse and vexation on finding his departure. By this seasonable manœuvre,



nœuvre, he effected his escape, and arrived in time to obtain a conference with his father before his death; from whom he received many useful instructions, and by whom he was formally declared his successor.

WHILST Constantius was thus happily employed, the provinces under the power of Galerius suffered every misery and hardship. Oppressed and harassed with taxes and impositions, nothing but grief and dismay were to be seen. The most barbarous cruelties were exercised on the smallest suspicion of concealing effects or property; from which none were exempt but beggars, whom he thoroughly extirpated by ordering them all to be thrown into the sea, as useless, and incumbrances to the state.

It was not till the 19th year of Dioclesian that the heavy persecution began, which made such havock in the Christian church. During the first years of this joint reign the emperors favoured the Christians, though they manifested their dislike to the Manichean and other heretics. The middle of this reign was noted for four famous ecclesiastics, Phileas and Hefychius, who were bishops, and Pamphilus and Lucian, who were presbyters; but some suppose that the last favoured the Arians, a sect which was then spreading in the church.

THOUGH the Christians were less kindly treated after the peace of the empire was settled by repeated victories over the revolters, after the emperors had solemnized their Quincennalia, when the persecution may be said to have commenced; yet for four or five years after it did not break out with its violence and rage. Dioclesian's superstition first gave reason for this change; for by the presence of some Christians, when he was sacrificing, the entrails failed of discovering the usual indications, to whom the attendants immediately attributed it. Maximinian also shewed much enmity to the Christian soldiers, and condemned them to the most servile offices. It was they who built the Baths of Dioclesian at Rome, those of the same name at Carthage and Milan, with many other extraordinary fabrics. Arnobius, an eminent Pagan, was soon after converted to Christianity.

MANY of the Christian soldiers were at first discharged, when they refused to do sacrifice to the Pagan deities, and vacancies in many honourable and profitable posts were thereby occasioned; for at first they began only with them, as fearing to declare against the whole body at once, on account of their numbers. This was indeed a fair warning to the Christians to be more attentive to their conduct; who, through their pride and other vices, gave too much cause to their enemies to disturb them.



BUT it was reserved for Galerius effectually to punish them for their immoralities; who repaired purposely to Nicomedia, to concert measures with Dioclesian to persecute them. Hierocles, the philosopher, was a violent promoter of the designs of Galerius. The old man was desirous of living at ease, and tried every means to divert the bloody counsels of Galerius; but being at last overcome, a day was fixed for its commencement, which was the 23d day of February, in the 19th year of Dioclesian.

AND now the most sanguinary and destructive edicts were issued, of the most distressing nature to the Christians. Not only their churches were ordered to be demolished, but their very scriptures to be burnt; and they were declared incapable of all honours and dignities, nor was any rank to exempt them from the most cruel tortures. The prelates of the church were all ordered to be fettered, and every means tried to compel them to sacrifice. Yet all these edicts were insufficient to satisfy the barbarous Galerius; who, the more violently to push Dioclesian to revenge, secretly caused the palace to be fired, and afterwards repeated it to bring disgrace upon the Christians, whom he charged with it. This drove the emperor to the most unbounded fury; when neither sex, or age, or character were regarded, but whole houses were burnt at once, and whole herds of Christians were at once pushed headlong into the sea.

FOR ten years did this persecution continue in the eastern parts of the empire, under the blood-thirsty Galerius, which ended but a little before his death; Arabia, Phœnicia, Cappadocia, Mesopotomia, and Syria, besides Bithynia, were the provinces where distinct kinds of punishments were most prevalent. In Pontus, Egypt, Thebais, and Phrygia, the variety and cruelty of the torments were such as to surpass all relation; particularly in the last province, where a populous city was surrounded by the Pagan soldiers, and every soul, men, women, and children, consumed in it, whilst they were employed in the exercises of devotion.

THE province of Gaul, where Constantius governed, was the only place which escaped the persecution; and he was obliged, as pressed to it by his superiors, to make a pretence of pulling down some Christian churches. Having once, as a masterly stroke of policy, made a shew of persecuting them, and commanded all the officers of his household to join in the Pagan sacrifices, or immediately to banish themselves; he dismissed all who consented to sacrifice, with great disgrace, and declared, that “those who would forsake their God, could never be faithful to their prince.” But the persecution continued in Italy:  
Africa



Africa, and those parts, which were more immediately governed by Maximian, not longer than two years ; as it ended with his resignation.

WE now resume the thread of the civil history, where we left Constantius delivering his last lessons of government to his son and successor ; by whose death, after a short reign of one year, one month, and 25 days from the resignation of Dioclesian, but above 13 years from the time of his being honoured with the title of Cæsar, and in his 56th year, the government devolved upon Constantine.

GREAT were the expectations of all men on his accession to the western empire. After honourably and splendidly celebrating his father's obsequies, he sent to Galerius an account of what had happened, and therewith his own image, wreathed with the imperial laurel, as a suitable compliment to the senior emperor. Fired with rage, and stimulated probably by the remembrance of Constantine's escape, he condemned both the image and the messenger to the fire ; but his friends dissuaded him from executing his threats, which would enrage the army, already too much displeased. He thereupon sent the purple to Constantine, but contrived to create his minion Severus both emperor and Augustus, who was an older man, and Constantine only Cæsar in partnership with Maximin.

BUT Constantine's title to the empire depended not on Galerius. His father had declared him his successor, and the whole people and army of the west were determined to support his title. When his image was exposed in Rome, according to the custom of new emperors, the ambition of Maxentius, son of Maximian, was thereby excited ; who caused himself, in the absence of Severus, whom the Prætorian soldiers detested, to be proclaimed emperor. In this usurpation he maintained himself six years, wherein the greatest acts of cruelty and tyranny were exercised ; though he soon lost Africa to another usurper, whose name was Alexander, who possessed the title of emperor for four years. Though Constantine was surpris'd at his rashness, Galerius was enraged, and immediately dispatched Severus to punish him for his temerity ; but he foresaw his danger, and now sent the purple again to his father in Campania, whom he declared the second time emperor, which he gladly accepted, having been forced to resign contrary to his inclination. As most of Severus's army had served formerly under Maximian, when they approached the walls of Rome, they refused to fight against the old emperor ; and by their abandoning him, he was compelled to flee to Ravenna, where he first resigned his im-



perial robes, and then put an end to his life by opening his veins.

GALERIUS, whose furious temper was well known to Maximinian, prepared to march his forces into Italy, to revenge himself of Maxentius and all the people ; but his soldiers followed the example set them by the troops of Severus, and soon abandoned him, so that he was compelled to supplicate them not to deliver him up to his enemies, and to retire with the utmost consternation. At this time Maximinian, to strengthen his forces, fortified Rome, and married his youngest daughter to Constantine ; but was soon dissatisfied, when his son Maxentius returned to Rome, in having only a share of the empire, which was productive of his ignominious expulsion from the city. He then repaired to Galerius, the inveterate enemy of his son, who was preparing to create Licinius an emperor in the room of Severus, which was effected in November ; on which occasion, to render it more solemn, Dioclesian also was requested to concur. But Maximin, in the east, resented this proceeding highly ; nor could all the messages of Galerius prevail upon him to accede to it. This induced Galerius to extinguish the title of Cæsar, and to declare himself and Licinius the proper emperors, and Maxentius and Constantine sons of the emperors, thereby excluding Maximin wholly, who soon assumed the title of Augustus. Hence was Galerius induced to give the same title to Maxentius and Constantine.

MAXIMIN now began to display his disposition, which was very similar to that of Maxentius at Rome ; but more excessive in his impieties and superstitions, in which he descended to the minutest matters. But of him we shall presently speak more fully ; as we must now return to Constantine, who had married the daughter of Maximian. This old man, finding his projects disappointed in the east, withdrew into Gaul, at a time when Constantine was preparing to march against the Franks. He suffered himself to be persuaded, by Maximian that part of his army would be sufficient ; who had the selfish view of retaining the greater part in his own power, and the wicked hope of his falling a sacrifice to this treacherous advice.

IN Constantine's absence, he assumed the character of emperor, pillaged the treasury, bribed the soldiers, and reported that Constantine was slain, and his army routed ; which he had sooner heard of, than he returned with incredible expedition so that Maximian, on receiving the account of his march was abandoned by the soldiers, and compelled to flee to Marseilles. He was soon given up by his own people to Constantine

tine



tine: who, upbraiding him with his crimes, stripped him of his imperial purple, but gave him the liberty of a private individual. Instead of being grateful for this merciful treatment, he attempted to corrupt his own daughter to murder her husband; which she discovered to Constantine, who now gave him permission to chuse his own death, though he had deserved the greatest tortures.

ANOTHER instance of merited punishment is met with in Galerius, who was visited with an ulcerous disorder, which baffled all the arts of physicians; and, after lingering out a full year, by which his body was become a general mass of putrefaction, abounding with noxious vermin, and his pains intolerable, besides the very noisome stench it emitted, not only over the whole palace, but even into the city, he was constrained, from a compunction of mind, to issue out an edict to stop the persecutions of the Christians. In this, he consulted Constantine and Licinius, whose names he joined with his own; and it is remarkable, that though he had endeavoured frequently to kill himself, and had caused many of his physicians to be slain for the inefficacy of their medicines, in a few days after he expired, having reigned a little more than six years from the resignation of Dioclesian.

THE miserable end of Galerius had no other effect on Maximin, than to afford him an opportunity of enlarging his dominions; for he now added Asia and Bithynia, which belonged to Licinius, and, though he had always been a severe persecutor, he was more and more violent against the Christians, and increased in acts of Pagan superstition. Maxentius also reduced Africa, whose insolencies and outrages were continually conveyed to Constantine in Gaul; who resolved, on being solicited by the senate and people of Rome, to check his usurped tyranny, and deliver the city from his numerous oppressions.

ABOUT this time the empire, to add to these calamities, was afflicted with most dreadful pestilences and famines. In the following year Constantine marched almost to the walls of Rome, with an army of 90,000 foot and 8,000 horse; on which occasion it is related, that he addressed his prayers to heaven, and implored the assistance of the only supreme God, in opposition to the false gods of Paganism, who hearkened to his supplication, and instructed him how to obtain the victory. “ΤΟΥΤΩ ΝΙΚΑ, In this overcome,” was the motto inscribed on the pillar which appeared to him in the shape of a cross, in the face of his army, about three o’clock in the afternoon; and, being afterwards fully explained to him by a Night Vision, he made it the standard of his army, which was to be the ensign of victory and safety. In the nature of some other



other celestial appearances he was also instructed by some Christian bishops ; to all which Constantine paid the most ready and chearful obedience.

WHILST Constantine was thus commendably employed, Maxentius was wallowing in the city of Rome, in luxury, licentiousness, and superstition. But he was now constrained to march out against his enemy ; when 170,000 foot and 18,000 horse, most of which were Romans and Italians who had severely felt his tyranny, accompanied him into the field, though their hearty wishes were for his downfall. For some time, however, the engagement was fierce ; but at last the troops of Maxentius retreated, when they were forced to betake themselves to a bridge of boats built over the Tiber, contrived with secret springs and engines to drown the army of Constantine, if they passed that way. This was so much overpressed by the weight of the flying army, that it separated, and they all sunk to the bottom ; amongst which was Maxentius, after an usurpation of about six years.

CONSTANTINE now entered the city of Rome in triumph amidst the acclamations of all ranks and degrees of the citizens ; and set up a cross as a standing monument of gratitude to that God, by whose direction and assistance he had been victorious, with the same inscription as that contained in his ensigns, and another descriptive of the issue and success of it. Many others were erected for him, with a triumphal arch at the foot of Mount Palestine ; and from this year the noted *Æra* of “ *The ROMAN INDICATION* ” commenced, when Constantine forbid, by a public edict, that any criminal hereafter should be crucified.

FROM this time he gradually and more openly favoured the Christians ; and in this year, in conjunction with Licinius, he made a law in their favour, a copy of which was sent to Maximin for his concurrence. But he wickedly suppressed it, and issued a rescript of his own, which, though it exempted them from persecution, gave them no encouragement to build churches, or even to hold public assemblies ; whereas Constantine proceeded so assiduously to favour them, that the Pagans began to manifest an envious and malignant disposition. This greatly affected Maximin, and even old Dioclesian, who had set his heart upon the extirpation of Christianity ; and, which was a decided blow, all the pictures and statues of Maximian were ordered to be pulled down. Soon afterwards Dioclesian died, in the utmost agony of mind, after governing the empire more than twenty years, in the 68th year of his age, and more than seven years from his resignation of the empire.

LICINIUS married Constantia, the sister of his colleague ;  
and



and new edicts were issued in favour of the Christians, granting them also many privileges. The grand secular games were now also neglected. Maximin now marched an army out of Syria in the winter to Bithynia; and, crossing the straits at Thrace, he subdued Byzantium by famine, after using every endeavour to corrupt the soldiers of Licinius. But as he was advancing, he heard that Licinius was coming to oppose his progress; and the latter, who had hastily collected about 30,000 men, while Maximin had 70,000, without any design of fighting, was encouraged in a vision to attack them, after an address to the same God who had performed such wonders for Constantine. With so much vigour did the forces of Licinius attack those of Maximin, that they were disordered and confounded by the very first onset, notwithstanding the utmost exertions of their leader; who was soon obliged to retire, after throwing away his purple robe, in the habit of a slave, one half of his army being destroyed, and the other half surrendered.

RETURNING with disgrace into his own provinces, he began to discard his favourite Pagan gods, as the betrayers of his interest; and now issued an edict more favourable to the Christians, allowing them to rebuild their churches, and ordering the restoration of their estates. He still fled before a victorious army, till he was compelled to take refuge in Tarsus; where the danger of being shut up both by sea and land, pointed out that death was his only resource. After eating and drinking to excess, he took poison; which did not immediately operate, through the overcharge of his stomach, but threw him into a lingering and miserable disorder, and occasioned for some time before his death, all the actions of phrenzy and madness, with the most intolerable pains of body and dreadful agonies of mind. Sensible of his horrid cruelties, he acknowledged his punishment was deservedly inflicted; and, after he had reigned in the East more than eight years, this bloody tyrant and most barbarous persecutor breathed out his soul in the most dreadful manner, calling upon that Divine Being for mercy, whose cause he had so heavily oppressed, and whose advocates so grievously had been tormented.

THIS account of the difficulties with which the great Constantine was surrounded, and his success in conquering them, must be peculiarly satisfactory to the readers, for whose information this work has been more peculiarly adapted. When he is considered as a native of Britain, according to the received opinion of English historians, though others make him a Dacian by birth, to whom it was reserved to overcome the prejudices of Paganism against such a formidable opposition;



it greatly augments its importance to the English reader. Of the numerous martyrs which fell in this persecution we cannot possibly take notice; which was most violent, both in effect and duration, under Galerius and Maximin in the east, but of much less continuance at Rome and the middle parts of the empire, and, as we have already remarked, very little or none in Gaul and Britain. And though the Christians, as we have heretofore observed, were divided amongst themselves, which sometimes rendered chastisement necessary; yet the dreadful fate of the authors of these last persecutions, and the flourishing prosperity of Constantine who favoured their doctrines, amply affords a most encouraging example. We shall see hereafter that the same success continued to await him.

HOWEVER amicably the two emperors accorded to favour the Christians, on the part of Licinius it was not very sincere; and when he found himself entirely free from the outrages of Maximin, by the total extirpation of his family, his disposition was soon manifest. They parted as friends, the latter to oppose the incursions of Maximin, and the former to suppress the inroads of the Franks, and independent people of Germany; but they afterwards met as enemies, from the factious temper of Licinius, who envied the authority of his colleague, notwithstanding their family alliance, and allured Bassianus, who had married another sister of Constantine, and had been named Cæsar, into the conspiracy.

BASSIANUS, on being discovered, naturally fled to Licinius, who refused to deliver up the criminals to the messengers of Constantine; on the contrary, the utmost indignities had been manifested to the statues of Constantine, after he had deprived Bassianus of his honours. A civil war immediately ensued, without allowing him time for preparation; and in the first battle, 20,000 forces under Constantine, routed 35,000 under Licinius, with the loss of his camp. In a second combat he was equally unsuccessful; and a treaty of peace soon after ensued, by which Licinius was compelled to deprive his general Valens of the title of Cæsar, which he had conferred upon him. It was stipulated that Crispus and the younger Constantine should be confirmed in the dignity of Cæsar in the west, and that the younger Licinius only should have the same title in the east.

FOR the space of eight years, the tranquillity of the empire was thereby secured; in which Constantine made many excellent laws, though some have been remarked as defective. In this interval, however, his eldest son Crispus was employed successfully against the Franks and Allemanni, a mixed people of different provinces, who had united under this title; whilst



whilst the emperor himself was exercised against the Goths with equal effect.

AND now the time approached when the fate of the empire was to be decided by force of arms; which a modern historian, who has been accused of too frequently favouring the Pagan writers, ascribes to the ambition of Constantine, whilst, with the Christian authors, others attribute it to the zeal of Licinius for his former Paganism. It is highly probable that Licinius was the aggressor, from his great preparations; as he brought an army of 150,000 foot and 15,000 horse, with a fleet of 350 gallies of three ranks of oars, whilst Constantine's amounted to about 120,000 of horse and foot, with scarce 200 small vessels, which had been hastily collected to the harbour of Piræus.

LICINIUS also had had time to fortify his camp near Adrianople, in a very advantageous situation on the opposite side of the river Hebrus; nor could Constantine accomplish a general engagement, till, by marching 5000 archers to possess a thick wood in the rear of the enemy, whilst their attention was occupied by the construction of a bridge in their front, he attacked them on all sides at once, and thereby compelled them to leave their superior position to combat in the plain. The contest was now soon decided; and his camp the same evening was assaulted after the battle, by the victorious army of Constantine. Licinius now fled to Byzantium; where his superior fleet remained inactive, and was soon after defeated by the active valour of Crispus, and a plentiful supply of provisions was the immediate consequence to the army.

THE siege of Byzantium proceeded rapidly, and Licinius thought it prudent to escape into Bithynia; where he once more collected a new army of about 60,000 men, which were soon attacked and vanquished; with the slaughter of 25,000. Shortly after, by the intercession of his wife Constantia, his life was spared, on condition of resigning the imperial dignity, and being banished to Thessalonica, where he soon died; but whether it was effected by a sedition of the soldiers, a decree of the senate, or from anxiety of remorse, though he has been accused of conspiracy, cannot be determined.

THIS happened in the year preceding the famous council of Nice; and the fruits of this re-united empire were, the foundation of Constantinople, whither the seat of government was from henceforth transferred, and the full establishment of the Christian religion.



## C H A P. XLIII.

*From the FOUNDATION of CONSTANTINOPLE to the FALL  
of the WESTERN EMPIRE.*

[ANN. ROM. 1076. A. D. 324.]

CONSIDERING the extent of the Roman empire, the situation of the new city must be allowed to be admirably adapted for the capital of a large dominion; and its public buildings and other elegant structures which were projected, such as entitled it to the character of the first city in the world. Anxious for its execution, the emperor pushed on the work with rapidity, so that it was completed in about six years; at which time it was called NEW ROME, but has retained the memory of the founder in preference, for almost 1500 years.

CONSTANTINE, when he was free from all competitors, began to look nearer home, and to cast an unfavourable eye towards his eldest son Crispus, who began to obtain a large degree of popularity. Whether he discovered any improper steps in his conduct is not altogether certain, but he was soon after banished and privately executed, on the accusation of some malicious informers, though principally, it has been said, through the artifices of Fausta, whose enmity to her son-in-law was unbounded. She might be influenced by accomplishing the ruin of Crispus, to make way for her own sons to succeed to the throne; all of whom were declared Cæsars, though at different periods. But some say that she soon after met her deserved fate; whilst others suppose that she escaped.

THE emperor also raised one of his two nephews to the dignity of Cæsar; for the other he devised the new title of "Most Noble." When the Sarmatians and Goths were contending for power, the former desired the assistance of Constantine, who declared in their favour; on which the Goths passed the Danube into Mæsia, where they every where spread terror and desolation. Against these invaders the emperor advanced in person, whose forces were compelled to retreat; but in a second action, in which his eldest son Constantine supplied



plied his father's place, the Roman arms were completely victorious. Unmindful of this signal service, the Sarmatians, on some slender pretence, harassed the Roman provinces in about two years after; when the emperor left them to the mercy of the Goths, by whom they were entirely vanquished.

AT peace with every part of the world, and enjoying the congratulations of a peaceable and prosperous government from the courts of Persia and the remotest corners of India, he died at the age of 64, after a reign of 30 years and 10 months; and his remains were conveyed to the new city, which was to render his name immortal.

His two nephews, whom he had impolitically dignified, were speedily marked as objects of destruction by the dissatisfied courtiers; and Constantius, the second son, when he came to Constantinople from his eastern station, pledged their safety, though they were soon afterwards murdered by the soldiers. Many others of his relations also suffered in this massacre.

WHEN the three sons were assembled, the eldest then about twenty-one, was allowed to succeed his father at his new city; Constantius, who was about twenty, had Thrace and the countries of the East; and Constans, aged seventeen, held Italy, Africa, and the western Illyricum. But the confusions at Constantinople had encouraged the Persians to invade the eastern provinces, and a spirit of disaffection was spreading amongst the eastern legions; but Constantius hastened from the interview with his brothers, and soon restrained the latter, yet the war with Persia continued to the end of his reign, when he had been sole emperor for ten years after the death of Constans, and twenty from the destruction of Constantine.

AT the end of three years from the division of the empire, the three emperors were dissatisfied with their respective shares; when Constantine, who demanded the cession of Africa from Constans, and prepared to maintain it by arms, was decoyed into an ambuscade, under a pretence of flight, and slain. The haughtiness of Constans, which was increased by his success, rendered him insupportable to his people; and after ten years more, in which he had kept the division of Constantine, together with his own, Magnentius was set up as emperor in the absence of Constans, who was thereupon shortly after murdered. Vetricio, an aged general, was also declared emperor of Illyricum, from the Danube to the extremity of Greece; whom, in a short time, Constantius found means to lull into a false security, and then to depose him. After turning his arms against Magnentius, and suffering some losses, and being much harassed, his troops were victorious in an obstinate



and severe engagement, which terminated, in a great measure, the fate of the usurper; for, though he appeared to make a shew of farther resistance, his affairs became more and more desperate, and at last, when he apprehended that he should be given up by the Romans, met a voluntary death by falling on his sword.

OF the two nephews of Constantine, who had been spared from the fury of the soldiers, Gallus, the eldest, then about twenty five years of age, though treated hitherto with great indignity, was declared Cæsar; to whom also the Princess Constantia was given in marriage. But her insatiate thirst for human blood occasioned her own ruin, together with that of her husband; so that he was beheaded in prison like a common malefactor.

JULIAN, the younger of the two sons of Constantius, had long been in extreme danger of life; but, after being sent to Athens as an exile, he was recalled to Milan, through the favour of the empress Eusebia, and declared Cæsar. From thence he was sent to govern the dominions of the West, and some time afterwards the emperor visited the ancient capital before his return to Constantinople. A pretended conspiracy of the general Sylvanus, as related by an informer, had before this time cost him his life; and Julian's fears had been greatly excited by the melancholy event, of which most people thought him innocent.

THE Quadi and Sarmatians, who had invaded Illyricum, occasioned the emperor to leave Rome; against whom he marched in person, and was singularly successful. But the Persian war still continued, by which the Romans were much harassed; which was at length terminated, though not very gloriously on the part of the empire. At this time Julian was more fortunately employed in Gaul against the Franks, whom he subdued; who at all times was occupied in adjusting the affairs of his civil administration.

SUCCESS excited the envy of Constantius, and led him to command the legions of Gaul to march towards the East. At this the soldiers were dissatisfied; and when Julian, on parting with them, thanked them for their valour and fidelity to him, they immediately proclaimed him emperor, notwithstanding his utmost endeavours to prevent it. He then, when nothing short of his being emperor would satisfy them, dispatched an embassy to Constantius to acquaint him with what had passed; but pointed out the necessity of his confirming the title of Augustus. The result of this was, that Julian found himself compelled, when his moderate and respectful conduct had only irritated, to commit his life and fortune to the chance of a civil war;



war; and his soldiers unanimously resolve to support him without delay as their emperor, when he marched rapidly towards the East to attack Constantius, before he could assemble the large army for which he had formed the most astonishing magazines. But Constantius died, after a short illness, as he was advancing to oppose Julian, probably hastened by an extreme agitation of spirits; after having reigned more than 24 years, and in the 45th year of his age.

JULIAN had, by this fortunate event, no competitor; and in a few weeks after he triumphantly entered the new city of Constantinople amidst the acclamations of the soldiers, the people, and the senate; where he soon paid the last respect to the remains of Constantius. The city of Aquileia, where some disaffected legions had made a stand, on being dismissed by Julian as suspicious, and erected the banners of Constantius on its walls, now opened its gates, and sacrificed the leaders of the opposition; and obtained the pardon of the emperor, who had now, in the thirty-second year of his age, acquired the undisputed possession of the whole empire.

His first object was to consider the duties of a governor, and to regulate his own empire accordingly; for which the course of his studies at Athens had been admirably adapted. In the various departments of a supreme magistrate, his regulations were well-designed; and particularly in the reformation of abuses he was zealously assiduous.

HAVING employed himself in these important services about sixteen months, he prepared to march against the Persians, and refused all mediation of ambassadors. He stopped at Antioch for the winter, where a great scarcity of grain was apprehended. He proceeded to Carrhæ, a very ancient city of Mesopotamia, from whence he meditated the attack of the Persian empire, which in a very short time he completely overran. He next proceeded to Assyria, in which he was for a time equally victorious; but as he pursued a scheme which depended on the like success of his generals, and of the assistance of the king of Armenia, the disaffection of that prince, and the misunderstanding of the generals, prevented the proposed junction before the walls of Ctesiphon. By this disappointment he was induced to retreat; and having first burnt his fleet, he resolved to march against the king of Persia, whose armies fled before him, but with the destruction of the whole country.

WHEN they resolved to return towards the Tigris, as supplies of forage were thus rendered impossible, the army of the Persians came forward to attack them. Every thing had contributed to defeat the object of the enterprize; and the emperor's



emperor's imprudence, which he now plainly saw, threatened the destruction of the whole army, and occasioned the greatest anguish of mind. Continual skirmishes were the consequence of this retreat, in which both armies suffered considerably ; till at last, in a moment of danger, when he was boldly animating his troops to repel the Persians, he received a mortal wound, which alone prevented the Romans from reaping the effects of a complete victory. On the news of this fatal accident, the Persian king, dispirited by the late defeat, recovered from his panic, and determined to renew his attack on the retiring Romans, now without a leader, and still in a perilous situation ; but, after much slaughter on both sides, the Roman arms were again victorious, and a peace, which to both sides was advisable, was soon after concluded.

JOVIAN, who had been elected on the death of Julian, though only a principal domestic, was extremely incapable of extricating the Romans from their embarrassments ; and therefore consented to give up five provinces beyond the Tigris, the invincible city of Nisibis, Singara, and the castle of the Moors, the strongest places of Mesopotamia. Against so disgraceful a peace, the public clamour was incessant ; but he disregarded the voice of the people, under the pretence of religiously and sacredly adhering to the treaty, and bid adieu to the luxurious provinces of the East, by marching to Antioch. From hence, after a short refreshment of six weeks from the greatest fatigues and most dangerous perils, he proceeded towards Constantinople, though the winter was fast approaching ; and in about four months after, when he had been acknowledged every where as emperor, he was one morning found dead in his bed.

A VACANCY now succeeded in the empire for ten days, when Valentinian, a native of Pannonia, who had been advanced to several considerable stations, was elected ; he associated his brother Valens with him in the empire, to whom soon after he divided the eastern parts of the empire from Greece to the confines of Persia, which were never after united. This was in the year of Christ 364.

BUT Procopius, the general of Mesopotamia, revolted the year following against Valens ; in less than one year, after several engagements, his forces and generals forsook him, and he was at last betrayed into the hands of Valens, and ignominiously executed. About this time were some dreadful earthquakes at Alexandria and in various other places of the Roman empire, by which vast numbers lost their lives, and the greatest alarms were occasioned.



THE Allemanni, on the accession of Valentinian, had been deprived of their customary presents, and therefore invaded Gaul, whilst Procopius had revolted in the East, and committed many depredations; and before Valentinian could reach them, they had removed the spoils and captives into the forests of Germany. In the beginning of the next year, in the middle of winter, they collected their whole force, and successfully attacked the Roman army; but this disgrace was expunged by their future good conduct and valour under Jovinus, who surprized them in their camp, and, after a whole day's obstinate contest, defeated them with the loss of 6000 slain and 4000 wounded, with the capture of their king.

FROM the time of Constantine, little more than occasional visits had been paid by the Roman generals to the island of Britain; and the Picts and Scots had in a great measure overrun the whole country. After this success of Jovinus, the distressing accounts which arrived from thence determined the emperor, after mature consultation, to dispatch Theodosius for the purpose of reducing the invading barbarians. The prudence of the general was the means of his success; for the citizens of London, after he had dispersed the several parties in the present county of Kent, opened their gates to him. By his good conduct he settled in about two years the disorders of the country, and returned with great reputation to check the continued inroads and invasions of the Allemanni, with increased honour; he was afterwards commissioned to stop the depredations of the barbarians in Africa, and to punish the revolt of Firmus, which had been provoked by the tyranny and oppression of Romanus, the military governor of that country. This was effected with his usual judgment and intrepidity, and Firmus was seized to be delivered to the general; but strangled himself to avoid the sense of that disgrace, which his repeated disloyalty and treachery had merited.

WHILST Theodosius was fortunately employed in Britain, the emperor Valentinian was compelled to march against the Allemanni, one of whose chiefs had surprized Mentz in Upper Germany, at the time of a Christian festival; but they dearly paid for this infraction of the public peace, though the emperor's life was in extreme danger. Upon this occasion, he planted the banks of the Rhine as a frontier barrier, from its source to the ocean, with strong castles and convenient towers; and, to prevent future irruptions found means to foment the internal disturbances of the different tribes of Germany. New fortifications were also erected on the frontier of the Rhætian and Illyrian provinces against the Quadi and Sarmatians; which were delayed by the representation of the  
Quadi,

Quadi, whose king, through the infamy of a worthless minister, was treacherously assassinated.

ENRAGED at this perfidy, the Goths, with the stipulated succours of Sarmatian cavalry, invaded Pannonia, in which country great ravages were committed; and Sirmium, the capital of Illyricum; was attacked by these barbarians, where they first met with an effectual resistance. But their success against the frontier forces was not less than in their other marches; and the bordering tribes were thereby encouraged to the same steps. The valour of the young Theodosius alone secured the subordination of the province of Mœsia. Valentinian, in the ensuing spring, left the city of Treves, from whence he had defeated the Allemanni, and being arrived on the banks of the Danube, the Quadi there supplicated his mildness; on which occasion, such was the violence of his ungoverned fury, that his whole frame was agitated with convulsive passion, and, by the bursting of a blood-vessel, he fell speechless into the arms of his attendants, and in a few minutes expired.

VALENTINIAN and Valens were both of them tinctured with cruelty. The emperors who had succeeded Constantine had favoured the doctrines of Arius in religious matters, except Julian, who adhered to Paganism; occasioned, probably, through the prejudice and hatred he might naturally conceive against the murderers of his family. The renowned Athanasius died about two years, and not quite seven months, before Valentinian, after combating with the advocates for the doctrines of Arius more than 46 years, from the time that he had been first seated on the archiepiscopal throne of Egypt; to which he was elected shortly after the council of Nice. In this time he had passed as an exile or fugitive 20 years, and had been five times expelled by the more powerful party, being always a particular object of their enmity; but such was the veneration for his character in the latter part of his life, that the Præfect of Alexandria was deterred from a persecution which he had meditated, by the people who instantly appeared in arms to defend him.

GRATIAN, his son, by the granddaughter of Constantine, had an hereditary claim to succeed; but two of the generals in Illyricum and Italy contrived to induce Justina, his second empress, to appear in the camp with her infant son, about four years old, whom they solemnly invested with the ensigns of supreme power. Their design was to make themselves masters of the empire, by reigning in his name; and, to prevent the horrors of a civil war, he admitted the young Valentinian to reign with him.

ABOUT



ABOUT this time the warlike Huns, who had been expelled from China, and had wandered westward in search of a settlement, after conquering the Alani, proceeded still westward against the Goths. Here they committed such dreadful ravages, as till then were unknown even to that hardy people; and their king, who had severely oppressed his people, found their unwillingness to repel this invasion, many of his subjects now embracing the means of revenging his barbarities. His death, which was the consequence, was succeeded by numerous misfortunes, and these barbarians were every where victorious; so that the Goths were compelled to supplicate Valens, who still commanded in the east, to grant them a peaceable asylum in Thrace, where they might cultivate the waste lands, and defend, as his subjects, the limits of the empire.

THE timid policy of Valens and his counsellors accepted this offer, the most ruinous and fatal which the Roman empire had yet experienced. Soon after did these restless people treacherously and cruelly revenge the effects of former wars upon the Romans; so that Valens, who, too late, discovered his error, was now compelled to march against them, and also to solicit the aid of Gratian, his nephew, who governed the western part of the empire. On this occasion, the Goths formed an alliance with those, from whose conquering arm they had so lately escaped; and Gratian, before he could march to the east, was obliged to repel an invasion of the Allemanni in Germany, which only was effected by a very bloody battle.

IN the mean time the Goths had penetrated as far as Adrianople, where, by a gallant manœuvre of a general of Valens, they were surprised in their camp, and their immense spoils fell into the hands of the Romans. But from a rash and precipitate conduct, by which Valens unnecessarily provoked a battle, and other inconsiderate proceedings, the Romans were totally defeated, and the emperor lost his life; for the Roman cavalry were compelled to fly, and the infantry was surrounded by the barbarian horse, and cut to pieces. After this signal success, they advanced to besiege Adrianople; but the vanquished Romans, who had therein sheltered themselves, determined to defend it to the last extremity. Finding this attempt to be vain, they advanced towards Constantinople, where they met a repulse from the Arabian horse, which at once astonished and compelled them to retreat.

BUT a horrid policy immediately succeeded this retreat, by the command of Julius, master-general of the troops; who had received a discretionary power from the senate of Constantinople, during the vacancy of the throne. By this step, all the sons of the Goths, which had been distributed in Asia

twelve



twelve years before, were consigned to a general massacre, at one and the same time, to prevent their adopting the example of their fathers in Europe, to the great danger of the public safety.

WHEN Gratian was informed, on his march towards Adrianople, of the fatal consequence of his uncle's rashness, and perceived himself too weak to revenge his death; he concluded that no time was to be lost in the choice of a successor, to check the various enemies of the empire. He wished to bestow it as the reward of virtue; and, passing over the ministers and generals, of whose true characters he could form little judgment, he recalled from exile the son of Theodosius, who but three years before had been ignominiously executed at Carthage, after having restored both Britain and Africa to the Roman government. Instructed in the arts of war by his father, and most liberally educated, he was well qualified for the arduous station; which he entered upon in the thirty third year of his age, with universal approbation.

His first object was to check the ravages of the Goths. He fortified and strengthened the cities, and revived a sense of discipline among his troops; and, seating himself at Thessalonica, he carefully watched the motions of the barbarians and directed their operations accordingly. As their sallies from the garrisons were more and more successful, detachments from them were gradually united into small armies; so that the Roman arms daily increased in strength and spirit, and the leader of the Visigoths dying about this period, the separate factions of barbarians diminished their power, and, at the end of four campaigns, they were totally reduced, and compelled to submit to the Roman government, on such terms as Theodosius thought proper to propose, and the new Gothic judge to accept. The final capitulation of the Visigoths was just four years, one month, and 25 days, from the defeat and death of Valens.

ON this occasion Athanaric, their leader, was received and hospitably entertained at Constantinople; where he soon contracted a mortal disease, through intemperance and indulgence at the imperial banquets. His funeral was celebrated with all possible solemnity in that city, and a stately monument erected to his memory; his whole army were so pleased with the liberality and conduct of Theodosius, that they enlisted under the standard of the Roman empire.

Soon after this period, the warlike Sapor, king of Persia, after a reign of 70 years, in which he had greatly harassed the Roman princes, finished the career of life. From that event, the court and councils of Persia were immediately changed; and an embassy was sent to Constantinople, with large presents  
and



and the proposal of a lasting friendship with Theodosius. Peace was soon after concluded, in which Armenia and Iberia were, on both sides, confirmed to be neutral and independent nations.

THE Ostrogoths, another nation of Goths, had retreated to explore new scenes of rapine and glory; but in about four years they hastily returned to the banks of the Danube, and, by the persuasions of pretended deserters, which the Roman general had sent as spies, they were encouraged speedily to attempt their camp, (which, probably, they designed to postpone to the ensuing winter) and for that purpose embarked in 3000 canoes. The Roman gallies were chained in a triple line on their own shore for two miles and a half to prevent them from landing; at which time a fleet of gallies was poured in upon them, and the whole body of the invaders was routed, and their king, with his bravest troops, was slain or buried in the waves. Those who escaped had no alternative, but to implore the clemency of the victorious enemy.

To judge from subsequent accounts in history, it was, perhaps impolitic to suffer the Visigoths, who had surrendered, to inhabit together in Thrace, or for the Ostrogoths to be united in Phrygia and Lydia. A distinct army, though maintained for the perpetual service of the empire, amounting to 40,000 men, served rather to preserve than eradicate their ferocious and hostile spirit. This was an obstacle to the habits of industry and obedience, and an interruption to agriculture and civil improvements, which the Roman emperor so much wished to encourage; and many Gothic deserters, who retired into the morasses of Macedonia, wasted the adjoining provinces by committing many depredations. They also expressed the greatest contempt for the Roman citizens and provincials; and their tumults appeared to be the effect of premeditated design, as it was generally believed, that their insidious spirit was no way subdued, though necessity had obliged them to sign a treaty of peace. It was supposed that the greater part of their chiefs had bound themselves previously, by a solemn and secret oath, never to keep faith with the Romans; but whilst they maintained the fairest shew of loyalty and friendship, that every favourable moment should be embraced of rapine, conquest, and revenge.

SEVERAL of their leaders were, notwithstanding, devoted to the service of the emperor, from motives of gratitude; and two parties were insensibly formed, of which the moderate one were the least numerous. Theodosius discovered this at a solemn festival, when the chiefs of both parties were invited to his table; who, being indiscreetly heated by wine, betrayed this



this fatal secret. The insolence of the fierce and faithless Priulf, who headed the more powerful faction, so exasperated the honourable and valiant Fravitta that influenced the other, as to follow him immediately from the palace, and to lay the other dead at his feet. The adherents of both parties flew to arms; but Fravitta was seasonably preserved and protected from the oppression of numbers, by the imperial guards. From this time the firm and temperate character of the emperor alone restrained the impatient Goths, and the public safety depended solely on his life and abilities.

In the mean time Gratian, who addicted himself to the pleasures of the chase, forgot his rank and dignity; and the army was so much dissatisfied with his conduct, that Maximus was proclaimed emperor in Britain, though he long affected to decline the honour, which was afterwards accepted. He now invaded Gaul with 30,000 soldiers and 100,000 plebeians,, who settled themselves in Bretagne; and the armies in that province joyfully received instead of repelling his march, so that Gratian, deserted by his troops, was compelled to flee to Lyons, where he was treacherously betrayed into the power of an officer of Maximus, who basely murdered him and the king of the Franks.

THESE events did not reach the ears of Theodosius, till the fatal blow was struck; and an ambassador was deputed to him by Maximus, to soften the catastrophe, at the same time soliciting his friendship and alliance, but declaring equally his readiness to contest the empire of the world. At last he consented, after much deliberation, that Maximus should retain the countries West of the Alps, whilst the brother of Gratian should possess Italy, Africa, and the western Illyricum; and provision was made in the treaty for preserving the equitable laws of his predecessor.

BUT Maximus, possessed with a spirit of ambition, not long after invaded Italy; when he gained the passes of the Alps by stratagem, and arrived before the city of Milan without any intelligence being obtained of his march, where the young son of Justina continued with his mother, and the half-brother of Gratian, resided. She had just time to flee to Aquileia for safety, from whence she applied to Theodosius for assistance; and the Imperial family were seated at Thessalonica, while Maximus had overrun all Italy except the little city of Æmone. At peace with Persia, and secure of the Gothic barbarians who followed his standard, preparations for war, which had been approved by his council, were every where displayed; by which the fears of Maximus were alarmed, nor could he be certain that by the passage of the Danube  
they



they might penetrate into the very centre of Gaul. The army of Theodosius consisted of the Huns, the Alani, and Goths, formed into squadrons of archers; who, fighting on horseback, put the Gauls and Germans into the utmost confusion, by charging them in their camp. Theodosius pursued the usurper who fled to Aquileia, and had but just time to shut the city gates; but he was soon delivered up to the emperor, whose regard for public justice induced him to abandon Maximus to the zeal of the soldiers.

THE general of Theodosius, who had been appointed master-general of the armies of Gaul, now began to have an eye upon the empire, and usurped the power of appointing or displacing officers at pleasure; at which the young Valentinian was alarmed, and secretly informed Theodosius, that his situation was that of a captive, and again implored his assistance. He was soon after found, strangled in his apartment; when the general, fearful of the consequences, raised Eugenius to the throne, designing himself to reign under his name. At this Theodosius, when the ambassador to announce the election arrived, was enraged, and engaged Iberians, Arabs, and Goths, to revenge the death of Valentinian; amongst whom was the noted Alaric, who so fatally exerted himself afterwards for the destruction of Rome. The forces of the usurper being very advantageously posted, the attack of Theodosius was followed by a prodigious slaughter, and the combat only ceasing with the night, he was obliged to withdraw his troops from the scene of action, in a very uncomfortable and hopeless condition. But a favourable tempest arose the next day from the east, of which the forces of the emperor availed themselves; and the issue was, that the usurper prostrated himself at the feet of Theodosius, and his general, having wandered several days among the mountains, put an end to his melancholy situation by falling on his own sword.

ALL hopes of prosperity were obscured by the death of Theodosius, but a few months after this signal victory. His successors Arcadius and Honorius, wanted talents and judgment to secure the advantages it afforded. Rufinus too, who had designs upon the throne, contributed by his artifices to the downfall of the empire; and Alaric, instructed by his late campaigns under the Roman standard, now declared war against it at the head of a numerous body of forces.

THE inactivity and gross neglect of the court of Rome, whither the emperor had now removed, had induced Britain and Gaul to revolt from their allegiance, and to provide means of protection and defence for themselves. A private soldier, of the name of Constantine, had been saluted emperor, on ac-  
count:

count of that name; and such was their distress, that they might hope for better fortune from almost any change of circumstances. In rescuing the unhappy country of Gaul from the barbarous rage of the German invaders, he was tolerably successful; but this news excited Honorius to dispatch a Goth of the name of Sarus, to subdue the rebel, with orders to bring his head to the emperor. Upon this Constantine was compelled to march against him, and the best troops of Britain and Italy were unhappily engaged in this civil commotion; but the usurper, after losing one of his bravest generals in the field, and another by treachery at an interview to establish peace, defended himself in Vienna, where for seven days the Imperial army ineffectually besieged him, and then was obliged precipitately to retreat, and to purchase a passage from the Freebooters of the Alps. These now served as a barrier to the dominions of the two monarchs.

APPREHENSIVE of danger from Spain, he turned his arms to that country, which soon submitted; but the surviving relatives of Theodosius, who had powerful influence, resisted this progress, and he found himself obliged to hire about 5000 barbarian auxiliaries, to subdue this opposition, so small was the force sufficient to effect the ruin of these unfortunate men.

ABOUT this time, such was the weak and languid state of government at Rome, that 4000 pounds of gold was actually voted, as a subsidy to secure the peace of Italy, and to conciliate the friendship of the king of the Goths; to which the Roman senate reluctantly submitted, after various attempts to demonstrate the servile and base tenor of such a compact. His brother Arcadius, who succeeded at Constantinople, being dead, Honorius was desirous of acting as a guardian for the young Theodosius; but was prevented from it by the difficulty and expence of the journey.

WHILST this was meditating, Alaric the Gothic king invaded Italy, partly to enforce payment of the gold which had been voted as the recompence of his services to Rome, and partly to enquire, as he speciously pretended, for what cause the principal minister of Honorius, who had been disgraced, had suffered death. He pretended to be the friend and ally of that minister, whose destruction had been accomplished by a faction, the progress of which Alaric had duly attended to; but the firmness of his demand of the subsidy was associated with a moderation, which deceived the ministers of the Roman emperor, who attributed to fear and weakness this politic and designing conduct. For he refused to put confidence in the Roman faith, unless the sons of two principal officers of state should



should first be sent to his camp as hostages, which prevented all negociation; and thinking themselves too secure, they disdained to assemble any army.

LULLED with these considerations, Alaric was enabled to pass the Alps and the Po without opposition; on which he pillaged the city of Aquileia and many others, which yielded to his arms. He now obtained 30,000 auxiliaries, and without facing a single enemy ravaged every where, except the impregnable city of Ravenna, on the shore of the Adriatic. By a circuitous march, he speedily arrived at, and pitched his camp under the very walls of Rome.

So judiciously did Alaric invest the city, that he soon commanded the avenues of its twelve gates, and prevented all supplies from approaching them by the Tiber; and famine and plague were speedy consequences of the siege. The haughty nobility, who had so lately despised this Gothic leader, and were filled with indignation at the daring intrepidity of attempting to surround the capital of the world, now found that negotiations for peace were necessary; and the siege was at length raised on an immediate payment of 5000 pounds of gold, 30,000 pounds of silver, 4000 robes of silk, 3000 pieces of fine scarlet cloth, and 3000 pounds weight of pepper.

THE Gothic king wintered in Tuscany, where numerous bodies of barbarians flocked to his standard. Aspiring to the rank of master-general of the western armies, he proposed that Dalmatia, Noricum, and Venetia, should be the seat of his new kingdom, and stipulated an annual subsidy of corn and money, but intimated that Noricum at least should be assigned him; which the emperor's new minister prevented, and the court of Rome repaired to Ravenna, leaving the ancient city, almost without defence, to the resentment of Alaric. His moderation only, and not the wisdom of Honorius, saved the city from hostile fire, by attacking the port of Ostia, where were the public granaries which supplied it; when he summoned the city to surrender, which it did, on threatening instantly, if they delayed, to destroy the magazines.

ALARIC now appointed Attalus, præfect of the city, emperor instead of the unworthy Honorius; who, in return, acknowledged the Gothic king master-general of the armies of the West. The two hostile nations now seemed to be united in the closest bands of friendship and alliance; and the minister and general of Honorius, such was his deplorable condition, both betrayed their trust, and paid their court to Attalus.

BUT his elevation was of very short duration. The failure of an ill-supported expedition into Africa, contrary to his

his boasting declarations, with a seasonable supply of troops to Honorius, changed the public opinion; and Alaric soon after deprived him of the Imperial dignity, and favoured Honorius, hoping by this step to secure a peace. It had not this effect; for the court of Ravenna repeated its former haughty language, and Alaric determined to revenge this peridy by a third visit to Rome, the gates of which were opened to him in the silence of night, and the city delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia. Plunder and detolation immediately succeeded; and the zeal of the Goths only restrained them from pillaging the churches and other appendages of Christianity, for which they retained the most profound veneration. But fire, that all-destroying element, consumed much of what would otherwise have been spared; and the redemption of captives was a large harvest to these needy barbarians.

AFTER the city had for several days been exposed to the ravages of the Goths, their leader thought proper to retreat, at the head of an army, encumbered with rich and weighty spoils. Passing along the Appian way into the southern parts of Italy, he cast his eye upon Sicily; but the first division of these people was dispersed by a tempest, which overtook them, immediately after their embarkation to cross the strait of Messina, about half an English league in breadth. This damped their spirits, and the death of Alaric put a total stop to the design.

ADOLPHUS, his brother-in-law, was now unanimously elected to succeed him; whose pacific disposition induced him to suspend the operations of war, and seriously to negotiate with the Imperial court a treaty of friendship and alliance. He now assumed the character of a Roman general; and with the approbation of Honorius, marched against those tyrants and barbarians, who at this time infested the countries beyond the Alps. Narbonne, Thoulouse, and Bourdeaux were soon occupied by them; and the interest of the republic was prosecuted with vigour, which has been attributed to the influence of Placidia the daughter of Theodosius, and sister of Honorius, whom he married. A short peace succeeded to this happy accommodation; and measures were taken to restore the culture of the provinces of Italy.

BUT Heraclian, who had hitherto supported the cause of Honorius, now assumed the sovereign authority in Africa; and, to enforce his presumption, determined to invade Italy. His simple conduct, and subsequent return, were speedily followed by death; which he received from the hands of those, who, disdaining his conduct, had returned to their rightful duty

About



About this time also Constantine, who had been proclaimed emperor of the Britons and Gauls, experienced a defeat, and met with his deserved fate. Others of the usurpers were soon after also vanquished, by means of the activity of Adolphus. After this, the remainder of the reign of Honorius was free from usurpation and rebellion.

He afterwards marched into Spain, when he had thus successfully settled affairs in Gaul; which had been much harassed by the Suevi, Vandals, and Alani, who had frequently invaded it. By an unexpected march, he passed the mountainous Pyrennees, and seized upon Barcelona; where he was soon after assassinated by a barbarian, whom he had taken into his service, whose brother immediately usurped the Gothic throne. Singeric's first act was to murder the six children of Adolphus, by a former marriage; and Placidia was treated as a common captive, and made to suffer the most cruel indignities, which were soon repaid by his own murder on the seventh day of his usurpation.

WALLIA was now unanimously declared king; who, after some designs of conquest, concluded and faithfully observed a treaty made with the Romans: by which Placidia was restored to her brother, and 600,000 measures of wheat were delivered to the hungry Goths. On these conditions, the new Gothic king engaged to draw his sword in the service of the Roman government.

THE Goths having entered Spain, which was divided into parties and factions, displayed the most brilliant achievements. In three campaigns they destroyed the Silingi and Alani, and repulsed the Vandals and Suevi, who had poured down, during the confusions of the empire, upon this country; all which the Gothic king faithfully restored to Honorius. They now seated themselves in the fertile province of Aquitain; and soon after the royal residence was fixed at Thoulouse. The Burgundians about the same time obtained a settlement in Gaul or Germany, with whom the usurper Jovinus had formed an alliance; and the Franks, who had been the faithful allies of the Roman empire, now followed the example of these invaders, and they progressively became possessed of all lower Germany. From this time is to be dated the ruin of the opulent provinces of Gaul.

ON the death of Arcadius, it has been intimated already, Honorius wished to assume the government or guardianship of his nephew Theodosius, who was then but seven years of age. Pulcheria, the sister of Theodosius, and but two years older, when she had arrived to the age of sixteen, assumed the command of the Eastern empire; which, after his death,



death, in her own name as she had before done in his, she continued to hold near 40 years. But the two monarchies were now totally separated; and, in the interval of about six years of the minority of Theodosius, the merit and integrity of Anthemius, the præfect, were amply manifested in humbling the haughty spirit of Uldin, commander of the Huns, who were then settled in Thrace, whom he obliged, with prodigious slaughter, to repass the Danube.

PLACIDIA, on her arrival in Italy, was again married, at the command of Honorius, to the brave Constantius, who was now appointed partner in the empire; who died in about seven months, and a quarrel between her and Honorius was soon after fomented by the insidious arts of some designing intrigues. But Placidia, to prevent the tumults occasioned by the partiality of the Gothic soldiers for their former queen, voluntarily banished herself to Constantinople, where she was honourably received; and soon afterwards the news of the death of Honorius was dispatched thither.

AN usurper, of the name of John, who filled the office of principal secretary, now advanced to the vacant throne; and by the submission of Italy, and the hope of an alliance with the Huns, he was induced to insult the majesty of the Eastern empire, in a message to that purpose. But a powerful fleet and army were sent against the usurper; the latter of which, consisting of the cavalry, was conducted so actively, that they surprised the important city of Aquileia. The fleet was dispersed by a violent storm; yet two of the gallies, with the general of the infantry, who had embarked in the fleet, were taken and carried into Ravenna. His son, who was at the head of the cavalry, was invited by the father to second a conspiracy in the city; on whose approach, after little resistance, the gates of the city were thrown open, and the usurper ignominiously beheaded.

THEODOSIUS, who was now in his 21st year, when the news arrived of the death of Honorius, had perhaps the best claim to the western empire. But he rather chose to remain quietly in the east, than to risk any thing amongst its barbarians and invaders; and therefore considered it as more advisable to place his cousin Valentinian, then only six years of age, upon that throne. Amongst other regulations, which finally settled the bounds of their dominions, the western Illyricum was granted to Constantinople; and the emperor of the east obtained the rich and maritime province of Dalmatia, and the dangerous sovereignty of Pannonia and Noricum, which for above 20 years had been ravaged by Huns, Ostrogoths, Vandals, and Bavarians. The laws of each empire were in future to be



be distinct from each other; and no statutes of one were to bind the other, unless it was adopted voluntarily and by consent.

DURING the long minority of the young emperor, his mother Placidia, who had herself a female claim to the empire, was entrusted with his guardianship. Desirous of power, she totally enervated the young emperor by a most dissolute education, and thereby retained the sovereignty 25 years. Through the quarrels of her two generals, Africa was lost to the empire, over which Boniface, one of them, presided, who had preserved his fidelity to her in her exile and distress; whereas Ætius, the other, had supported the usurper, and actually brought an army of 60,000 Huns from the Danube to the confines of Italy for his service, but had accepted an advantageous treaty on his untimely death. By continuing in the service of the young emperor, he had the means of corresponding with his barbarian allies, whose retreat had been purchased by large gifts and liberal promises. It was he who excited and fomented the rebellion of Boniface, and betrayed both him and their mistress by the basest duplicity; till Boniface was at last constrained to send to the camp of Gonderic, king of the Vandals, then in Spain, with proposals of alliance and advantageous offers of settlement.

THE Suevi also were settled in Spain, and in opposition to the Vandals: but the latter prevailed, after much hostility, and soon after overrun the provinces of that country. On the death of Gonderic, his bastard brother Genseric succeeded; a name, as terrible in the history of Rome's decline and ruin as those of Alaric and Attila. Hermanric, king of the Suevi, resolved to ravage the territories which he was forced to abandon; which so enraged Genseric that he hastily pursued the Suevi, and drove the king and his army into the river Anas, the modern Guadiana, which falls into the Atlantic Ocean at Cadiz. He now returned calmly to the sea-shore, to embark his victorious troops for Africa, whither they had been invited by Boniface, who had contributed equally with the Spaniards to furnish the vessels necessary for passing the Straights of Gibraltar. In this expedition, notwithstanding the swarms of barbarians which have been related as issuing from the North, it is not probable that more than 50,000 effective men were contained.

GENSERIC's active spirit, with the discontents of the Moors in Africa, soon procured him numerous and intrepid allies; and in favouring the factious Donatists of that province against the Romans, he increased his forces to such a degree as to effect his conquest. By means of friends the villainy of Ætius was brought to light; and Boniface obtained



the forgiveness of Placidia for an injury, into which he had been so wickedly deluded, but too late to repair the misfortune produced by inviting the Vandals into Africa. In vain did he oppose himself to the furious Vandals and the enraged Moors, who had united with them; but he defended himself, after being defeated in a pitched battle, in the city of Hippo, where the famous St. Augustine was bishop, for 14 months, till the besiegers were obliged, from famine, to relinquish their design. During this siege this bishop died in the city at the age of 76.

THOUGH Boniface, after receiving a reinforcement from Constantinople, at the intercession of Placidia, was again defeated by the irresistible Vandals, his reception at Ravenna was favourable; and he was appointed master-general of the Roman armies, with the rank of Patrician. At this time the perfidious Ætius was in Gaul; who, stung with pride at the discovery of his villany, and the favours granted to Boniface, hastily marched into Italy with an army of barbarian followers, where their quarrel was decided by the successful force of the latter. But Boniface unhappily received a mortal wound, which terminated his life in a few days; and Ætius was declared a rebel, and, after attempting to defend some strong fortresses on his own patrimonial estate, compelled to retire into Pannonia to the tents of his faithful Huns.

It was full eight years from the last defeat of Boniface in Africa, and the consequent submission of the city of Hippo, before Genseric could reduce Carthage to obedience; in which time he had been obliged to compromise the internal confusions of the natives, who little relished his continuance as a conqueror, by consenting to leave the western emperor in the quiet possession of the three Mauritanias, and to deliver, as a pledge of his fidelity to observe the treaty, his son Huneric for an hostage. Carthage was, therefore, taken by surprise, when by his protestations of friendship he had produced a relaxation of the vigilance of his enemies.

THE Vandals, by forming an alliance with Attila and Bleda, the two kings of the Huns, were enabled to maintain their ground in Africa. About this time they were meditating a fresh enterprize against some of their neighbours; but it was yet uncertain, whether the peace of the eastern or western empire might be interrupted, or if they might not extend their views to Persia, whither they had heretofore rapidly carried their arms. The eastern empire was tributary to them; they had stipulated for a safe and plentiful market on the banks of the Danube, and had doubled the annual contribution of 350 to 700 pounds of gold, besides a ransom of eight pieces of gold



gold for every Roman captive who had escaped from them. The emperor also agreed to renounce all treaties and engagements with the enemies of the Huns; and all fugitives, who had fled for refuge to the court or provinces of Theodosius, were ordered to be given up to their fury.

THE courts of Ravenna and Constantinople meditated a design to recover Africa; but Genferic excited Attila to invade the eastern empire, as a means of preventing it, and pretences were soon found to commence hostilities, and, partly by treachery and partly by valour, they soon ravaged the country as far as Constantinople, after defeating the Imperial forces in three several engagements. This city, with one or two others, they could not obtain; but to such a pitch of humiliation did these barbarians reduce the eastern empire, that Theodosius was constrained to grant a large extent of country on the South of the Danube, and to consent to treble the last stipulation of the annual contribution to 2100 pounds of gold, each pound of gold being equivalent to 40 pounds sterling, besides an immediate payment of 6000 pounds of gold to defray the expences of the war. Besides these degrading conditions, the Huns insisted upon the free restoration of all fugitives, yet at the same time received a ransom of 12 pieces of gold for every Roman captive who escaped.

SUCH weakness only tended to invite a repetition of injuries; and the policy of the western Romans, equally timid or selfish, abandoned the eastern empire to the mercy of the Huns. To such an impoverished state was Theodosius reduced, that the last stipulated bounty was but slowly executed, and several embassies, with repeated threats of the consequences of delay, were sent to Constantinople, to enforce the completion. During these transactions, an attempt was made to engage the minister of Attila into a conspiracy against his life; which he dissembled to countenance, but afterwards disclosed to his master. Additional exactions, and other oppressive proceedings, ensued upon this discovery; and Theodosius, after a stinging reprimand for hearkening to such counsel, was forgiven by Attila. He did not long survive this mortifying humiliation; but being thrown from his horse, he expired a few days afterwards from the effects of the fall, at the age of 50, after he had reigned 43 years.

HIS sister Pulcheria, whose authority had hitherto been controuled by the mischievous influence of the eunuchs, now succeeded; when she married Marcian, a senator, aged about 60, who was solemnly invested with the imperial purple.

ATTILA now prepared to invade Gaul, but actually threatened both empires. Marcian, though desirous of peace,



with becoming courage declared to the ambassadors of Attila, who pressed the demand of the tribute, that the Roman majesty must not be insulted with the mention of a tribute, though he was disposed to reward the friendship of his allies; that he had troops, if they presumed to violate the public peace, and arms, and resolution, to repel their attacks. His minister, in the camp of the Huns, held the same language.

After Ætius had retired, in consequence of being proscribed at Ravenna, to the Huns, he solicited pardon, through their friendship, from the empress Placidia, at the head of 60,000 men; which she found herself obliged to grant, and to bestow upon him the rank of Patrician, with the whole military power of the state. He afterwards seasonably arrived in Gaul, to protect the city of Arles, the wealthy seat of government and commerce, from the attempts of Theodoric, son of the great Alaric, and successor of Wallia who now swayed the Gothic sceptre; where he vigorously defended the different parts of that province from the hostile attacks of the Goths and Burgundians, and fought many battles with great slaughter of the enemy. But when Ætius was called to Rome, on account of the more intestine divisions of the state, the general, who was next in command, soon fell into the hands of the barbarian; and this fatal war was terminated only by the speedy return of Ætius, whose presence alone gave importance to the Roman forces. This induced the two generals to sheath their swords in the field, to prevent an issue of which both were doubtful; and a permanent reconciliation immediately succeeded.

UNDER a pretence of demanding the princess Honoria, the daughter of Placidia, he first invaded Gaul, and actually besieged the city of Orleans; which was in danger of falling, when the united Roman and Gothic banners appeared to its relief. He was thereupon obliged to retire to the plains of Champagne, and to sound a retreat to some of his troops who had just forced their way into the city. After the Romans had much harassed his retreat, he made a stand in the plain of Châlons, where was a sharp contest to possess a small eminence, that gave some advantages from its commanding situation; but at last, after an obstinate and hard-fought battle, Attila was compelled to withdraw in the night, which alone saved them from total destruction. In this conflict Theodoric was slain.

FROM motives of impolitic jealousy the Huns were permitted to withdraw from Gaul without farther molestation; which left Attila at liberty, early in the year ensuing, to pass the Alps and to invade Italy. Three months were spent in  
besieging



besieging Aquileia without effect; when a scarcity of provisions pointed out the necessity of retiring, and orders for that purpose had actually been given. But the ominous circumstance of a stork's preparing to leave her nest, induced him to return to the charge, and a breach was soon made in the wall, in the part whence the stork had taken her flight, through which his followers speedily entered. He thence ravaged the other cities of Italy; and his progress was terminated by the only expedient, which then offered, of deprecating his wrath by a suppliant embassy, and of purchasing the deliverance of Italy by the ransom or dowry of the princess Honoria.

A time being limited, within which this princess was also to be delivered, he threatened, before he left Italy, to revenge the neglect with greater and more implacable cruelty, if it was not fulfilled. But he soon after fell a martyr to his indulgence; and, by the bursting of a blood-vessel in the night, his life was terminated, soon after which the miseries of his own followers were numerous, and their mutual quarrels decided their existence as a people.

ÆTIUS, who was unequal to attempt the relief of Italy, without the assistance of the son of Theodoric, who refused to leave Gaul, was soon after this condemned to death by the feeble and dissolute Valentinian; who had now attained to his thirty-fifth year, without possessing either reason or courage. He violated the wife of Maximus, a wealthy senator, whom he had betrayed into his power; but the senator's revenge was soon displayed, in procuring two of the domestics of Ætius, whom the emperor had admitted among his guards, to assassinate the worthless and despicable tyrant.

It should not be omitted, that the late emperor's widow had been forced into the arms of his successor, contrary to all decency and propriety, and with the utmost reluctance. This usurper, whom she could scarcely consider in any other light than that of the murderer of her husband, was odious and hateful to her; and the spirit of revenge excited Eudoxia to solicit Genseric, as she could not have sufficient assistance from the court of Constantinople, to espouse her cause. Under the specious pretence of vindicating her honour, he alleged that both compassion and common justice required him to demand a reparation for the injuries she had sustained. His indolence, though he could scarcely be ignorant of the hostile preparations making on the opposite shores of Africa, induced him to wait with indifference their approach, without embracing or practising any means of defence, negotiation, or retreat; nor could he be roused from his lethargy, but by the



clamours of a fearful and enraged multitude, when the enemy actually disembarked at the mouth of the Tiber. He then thought of nothing but a hasty flight, to which he likewise exhorted the senators; but he no sooner appeared in the streets than he was stoned to death by the inhabitants of the city, and his mangled body, after receiving every ignominious indignity, was cast into the Tiber. The rejoicings of the people were incessant; and the domestics of Eudoxia were distinguished for their zeal in the service of their mistress.

AFTER plundering the city of every thing valuable, the Vandal king prepared to return to Africa. Eudoxia, who advanced to Genferic as her deliverer, now found the consequences of her late imprudent conduct; for she was herself rudely stripped of her jewels, and, with her two daughters, the only surviving remains of the great Theodosius, carried away captive by the haughty Vandals. Several thousand Romans of both sexes were also transported in this fleet; and such was the unfeeling barbarity of the plunderers, that wives were separated from their husbands, and children from their parents. By the humanity and exertions of the bishop of Carthage, their disconsolate condition was in some measure softened.

DURING the short reign of Maximus, Avitus, who was descended from an honourable family in the diocese of Auvergne, and had been employed for 30 years in a civil and military life, was called from his retirement to the important station of "master-general of the cavalry and infantry of Gaul." From motives of interest, he visited Theodoric, the king of the Visigoths, at Thoulouse, who courteously received him; and the foundations of a solid alliance were forming, when intelligence arrived of the murder of Maximus. Hereupon, with the support of Theodoric, Avitus was elected by the representatives of Gaul, in the annual assembly of the seven provinces, which was then at hand, to fill the vacant throne; to which the provincials and barbarians consented, and the consent of Marcian, then emperor of the East, was obtained. Rome and Italy, with the senate, reluctantly, but unavoidably submitted to this choice.

IN the following year, Theodoric, as the faithful ally of Avitus, by whose assistance he had been raised to the throne, gained a decisive victory in Spain, over the Suevi; after the Roman emperor had in vain made them advantageous offers of peace and alliance, to divert them from their design of conquering that country. But Avitus, towards the latter end of this year, was deposed by the Romans; which his indulgence in the pleasures of Italian luxury and his indiscreet amours,

with



with many other concurring causes, produced. By the influence of Ricimer, whose mother was the daughter of Wallia, king of the Visigoths, heretofore mentioned, and at this time a principal commander of those barbarian troops, who formed the military defence of Italy, Avitus was compelled to abdicate the Imperial throne. His death speedily followed, as he was hastening towards Auvergne, his native province; but whether from disease, occasioned through fear and anxiety, or the sword, in consequence of the senatorial decree of death, is uncertain, yet were his remains decently transported to and deposited in his native province.

OF his successor Majorian, son of that Majorian, commander of the troops of the Illyrian frontier, to whom the great Theodosius had given his daughter, an ancient historian has thus expressed himself; that he was gentle to his subjects, “terrible to his enemies, and excelled in every virtue all his predecessors, who had reigned over the Romans.” He was raised to the throne by his immediate connexion with Ricimer, who had governed Italy for some months with the title of Patrician; when the Romans became universally desirous of an emperor, from which station, his own birth, as a barbarian, excluded him: and Majorian, whom he had appointed master-general of the cavalry and infantry, having lately obtained a victory over the Alemanni, was invested with the purple of Ravenna.

MAJORIAN prepared and renewed many useful and excellent laws; and took some bold measures for restoring, in some degree, the beauty of Rome. Enraged at the conduct of Genferic, he prepared to attack him; and he had entertained the judicious policy of carrying on war against the Vandals in their new settlement, to chastise them for their descent in a large fleet, at the mouth of the Liris, where they had been surprized by the Imperial troops, and great slaughter had ensued. The brother-in-law of Genferic, their leader, was found amongst the slain.

BUT the Italians were become effeminate and enervated. Unskilled also as they were in military arts, they could not support the heroic courage and virtue of their emperor; who was, therefore, compelled to employ a number of barbarian auxiliaries, that were induced from the fame of his liberality and valour to join the standard, besides the confederates who were already engaged in the Imperial service. The emperor saw the necessity of a fleet to effect the conquest of Africa; and, under the most unfavourable circumstances, he speedily prepared and collected a navy of 300 large galleys, with the necessary proportion of transports and smaller vessels, to the harbour



harbour of Carthagera in Spain. In the character of an ambassador to Carthage, but in disguise, Majorian is said to have visited Genſeric, with propoſals to treat for peace; and the powerful Genſeric, ſufficiently acquainted with the character of his adverſary, in vain exerciſed his uſual artifice and delay, and was more and more ſubmiſſive to obtain it. Ruin and deſtruction muſt have enſued on this occaſion, if Genſeric had not found means to corrupt ſome powerful perſons among the Romans, probably envious of the emperor's ſucceſs; by whoſe means this large fleet was ſurprized, being unguarded, in the bay of Carthagera, and in a ſingle day deſtroyed.

GENSERIC renewed his ſolicitations for peace, notwithſtanding this victory, and a ſuſpenſion of arms was conſented to. But this diſaſter ſerved as the pretext of a conſpiracy among thoſe who diſliked his reformation of abuſes; and, in leſs than five years from the abdication of Avitus, he was obliged to follow the example of his predecessor.

THE powerful Ricimer now beſtowed, through the Roman ſenate, the title of emperor on Libius Severus, a man unnoticed in hiſtory on any other occaſion; reſolving no longer to promote ſuperior virtue and merit, even in a friend. Through him Severus reigned about fix years, till his life became inconvenient to Ricimer; when, in conſequence of his death, Anthemius was raiſed to the vacant throne. In this interval, though this modeſt barbarian diſclaimed the title of king, he accumulated treaſures, formed a ſeparate army, negotiated private alliances, and in fact ruled Italy with an independent and deſpotic authority. Marcellinus, a Roman general, who had reluctantly ſubmitted to Majorian, was, however, appointed governor of Sicily, with the command of an army, to reſiſt or attack the Vandals; but he afterwards, by means of his faithful followers, poſſeſſed himſelf of the province of Dalmatia, and aſſumed the title of Patrician of the Weſt. Having ſecured the love of his ſubjects by a mild and equitable reign, he raiſed a fleet which claimed the dominion of the Adriatic, and alternately alarmed the coaſt of Italy and Africa. At the ſame time Ægidius, maſter-general of Gaul, who declared a mortal reſentment againſt the aſſaſſins of his beloved maſter, maintained his independency beyond the Alps; and the Franks, who had baniſhed Childeric for his follies, elected him for their king. In about four years, he is ſuppoſed to have been poiſoned, with ſuſpicions of its being effected through the intrigues of Ricimer.

AFTER Eudoxia, with her two daughters, had been carried to Carthage, the elder of them became the reluctant wife of the eldeſt ſon of Genſeric. Upon this Hunneric demanded



manded a just proportion of the Imperial patrimony, and a valuable compensation was offered by the Eastern emperor Leo, a Thracian who had succeeded Marcian, after a reign of seven years, to purchase a necessary peace; when Eudoxia and her younger daughter Placidia were honourably restored. The emperors of Constantinople, who are supposed by secret articles with Genseric, to have engaged not to draw their sword against the Vandals, were prevented from interfering in support of the western empire; which Leo at last resolved to shake off, and to provide a new emperor of the West, whom he solemnly invested with the diadem and purple.

ANTHEMIUS had already risen to the stations of count, master-general, consul, and patrician, in consequence of his marriage with Euphemia, the daughter of the emperor Marcian; on which account he had reason to expect the succession of the eastern empire. His appointment to the western empire was about ten years after; and, with a large retinue, almost equal to an army, he came triumphantly to Rome, where his reception was most flattering, and his election confirmed. By his daughter's marriage with the patrician Ricimer, the happiness of the state was provided for; and the greatest rejoicings were celebrated on so pleasing a prospect of future prosperity. Marcellinus also was at the same time reconciled to the two empires, in consequence of acknowledging the title of Anthemius, and accompanying him in his journey to Rome.

Soon after his accession, unfavourable appearances were exhibited of the emperor's designing to revive the Pagan mythology, which cast a cloud over the desirable serenity.

THE emperor Leo now exerted the full powers of the eastern empire to deliver Italy and the Mediterranean from the Vandals, though he declined his personal services; and Anthemius, who had the greatest reason to engage in this design, was equally forward, so that Genseric was threatened from every side with a formidable invasion. Heraclius, the præfect, embarked the troops of Egypt, Thebais, and Lybia, with the horses and camels of the Arabs, designed to open the roads of the desert, and landed on the coast of Tripoli, the province of which was soon subdued. He then hastened, by a laborious march, to join the Imperial army under the walls of Carthage.

GENSERIC was alarmed at the news of this success; and still more the reconciliation of Marcellinus with the two emperors, who had already expelled the Vandals from the island of Sardinia. A fleet of 1113 ships, containing more than 100,000 men, including soldiers and mariners, was dispatched from Constantinople to Carthage, under the command of Basiliscus,